Philura Gould Baldwin
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The New REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOL. LXXIV NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 1933 NUMBER 958

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The Week

THE speed with which the Roosevelt administration continues to propose and act upon new legislation of the most far-reaching importance is the marvel of the world. Here is a partial list of the activities over the last week-end:

The President signed an executive order reducing veterans' appropriations by more than $400 million annually.

The Senate Agricultural Committee paid a visit to the White House and had a long conference regarding the farm bill, after which the opposition of certain members of the committee magically melted away.

Long conferences were held regarding the railroad problem, as a result of which it was tentatively decided to put the affairs of all the railroads into the hands of a federal "coördinator" who will act virtually as a dictator.

The administration considered objections raised to certain features of the "federal blue-sky law" for the protection of investors.

The investigation by the Senate Banking and Currency Committee into activities of private banking firms, from J. P. Morgan down, was considered and the inquiry will go forward, probably with new authorization from the Senate.

Plans were set on foot for carrying out the provisions of the new "peacetime army" law, and for enrolling the maximum number of men in the minimum limit of time.

The administration decided to ask Congress for authority to issue $2,000 million or $3,000 million in 4-percent bonds with which to refinance farm mortgages.

Under pressure from the Roosevelt administration, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation announced its first important loan for housing—about $8 million to the Fred F. French Company for the rehabilitation of two blocks of slums on the lower East Side in New York City.

Also under pressure from the White House, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee began consideration of the resolution for American entrance into the World Court.

AMID this whirlwind of activity, many people are asking how it is possible for one man to keep abreast of it, to make decisions of such tremendous importance at such a high rate of speed. In part, the accomplishment is due to Mr. Roosevelt's personal abilities, to his power of decision which is coupled with the keenest sense of political realities. It is also due in part to the fact that he came into the White House with many proposals already prepared in documentary form. But even more important, in our judgment, was the disgraceful inaction of the Hoover administration, which failed to do so many things which simply cried out to be done. The Roosevelt administration found itself confronted with a deficit in social legislation not only covering the four years in office of the great Engineer-Humanitarian, but the Coolidge and Harding administrations as well. Most of the projects which are now being considered in Washington are not new; they have been advanced many times in the pages of The New Republic as well as in other places. When the dam breaks, the waters come with a rush.

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NEARLY everyone has agreed that an essential measure, not only of farm relief but of rescuing the lending institutions, is to refinance farm mortgages at a lower rate. President Roosevelt now proposes to do this by issuing Federal Land Bank bonds at 4 percent, which may either be exchanged directly for the mortgages or sold to the public. They will not increase the net national debt burden—provided the farmers can pay the 4.5 percent which it is planned to charge them. This rate, however, seems too high materially to lower the farmers' burden. The administration may be right that a lower rate was impossible; perhaps the market would not have sustained it, or perhaps it would not have provided a large enough yield to salvage the lending institutions. In any case, however, it adds to the certainty that mortgage relief alone is not sufficient to put the farmer on his feet, as opponents of the other farm measures said it was. Many farmers who are in serious difficulty are not mortgaged at all. Crop prices must be raised if they are to be benefited. And there is slight prospect indeed of raising the prices of wheat and other important crops through a restoration of the foreign market.

THE Nazi government, obviously frightened by the worldwide uproar over its boycott of the Jews, has hastily announced that if foreigners only behave themselves, this boycott will not be resumed. Such a statement is, of course, simple nonsense. A boycott cannot be turned on and off like a hot-water faucet. The Nazis, even before the official boycott of last Saturday began, were doing almost everything they could to injure the Jews, and this course they will continue. Every Jew holding a public office which might be filled by a greedy Hitlerite has been or will be dismissed; no Nazi will trade with a Jew if he can help himself. Jewish merchants, lawyers, physicians and teachers will feel the boycott long after it has officially ceased to exist. The New Republic has frequently pointed out that anti-Semitism is an integral and important part of the Hitlerite program and by far the easiest of their pledges to carry out. The National Socialist leaders made the fantastic promise to bring work and prosperity to hundreds of thousands of Germans who have been unable to make a living, by the simple expedient of eliminating the Jew. Since their more cultured and cautious Nationalist allies in the Cabinet were opposed to drastic measures, they had to find a pretext for their actions, and they found it in the public indignation in foreign countries over the barbaric methods by which the new regime launched its dictatorship.

NO RECENT news has been more discouraging than the information that the German Social Democratic party has resigned from the Socialist Labor (Second) International. The action was taken, according to news reports, when the Executive Committee of the International passed a resolution condemning the present German government. This means that the German Socialists have once again, as they did during the Great War, betrayed the cause of internationalism. No doubt they were under tremendous pressure, but it is hard to believe that they could not have found some way to stand firm. In Italy, the Socialist party has never broken with the Second International, and although driven underground, is still true to its principles. The action of the Germans is the more regrettable since German Socialism played an important part in establishing the First International, and the most important part in bringing about the Second.

A FEW months ago, an official spokesman of the American Legion stood on a public platform in New York City and stated openly that veterans' appropriations would not be reduced because no politician had courage enough to reduce them. Events have proved him wrong; President Roosevelt has signed an executive order reducing payments by more than $400 million annually. It was not a pleasant choice which he was compelled to make. Most people agreed that reductions of the ex-soldiers' allowances were desirable. That in many individual cases hardship will result goes without saying: thousands of these men have had no other source of income and will now be destitute. Taken by itself, the action is completely deflationary; President Roosevelt can justify it only if he promptly brings about an equivalent amount of purchasing power in the general population and, through his various other activities, provides employment for the veterans who now lack it.

FOR some time, reports have been current in Washington that the administration plans for reorganization of government bureaus might eliminate, as separate entities, the Federal Trade and Interstate Commerce Commissions. A week ago, Mr. Roosevelt gave assurances that nothing would be done to curtail the usefulness of these bodies; but now there are again reports that the Interstate Commerce Commission may be "consolidated out of existence" by being placed under the authority of the Secretary of Commerce. We hardly need to point out that this would be a disaster. Regardless of the personal qualities of the Secretary, he cannot protect the public interest as can a group of independent commissioners. Maintenance of the I.C.C. is doubly important in view of the railroad reorganizations and consolidations which are coming. We hope Mr. Roosevelt will not mar his excellent record by taking a step which, in the effort to save the taxpayers a few thousands, might cost the country millions.

DIEGO RIVERA, the Mexican painter, is one of the most important of living artists; and when the city-owned Detroit Institute of Arts wished to decorate its walls with a series of murals (the gift of Edsel Ford) it was not at all surprising that Rivera should have received the commission. Even

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before the murals were completed, however, trouble broke out. Detroit Catholics, apparently inspired by the fact that in Mexico Rivera was an anti-clerical, began denouncing his work. They even went so far as to trump up the charge that a modern mural showing a vaccination is a travesty on the standard Catholic technique in painting the Holy Family. When the murals were completed, other Detroiters joined the outburst. They complained that the laborers shown in the pictures were "a slander to Detroit workingmen," and even dragged out the good old adjective, "un-American." A learned member of the City Council found one panel to be "pornographic," though it merely showed the effect of disease germs upon the human body. The Detroit News has seriously suggested that "the best thing to do would be to whitewash the entire work completely," and this suggestion is repeated in demands made by some of those truculent "club-women" who, in America, are unfailing in their instinct for the right moment to come forward and make fools of themselves.

THERE is historic importance in the fact that, under the spur of the Roosevelt administration, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation has made its first big loan for housing. Heretofore, it has listened to the short-sighted and selfish pleas of real-estate interests and has either refused to make housing loans or has set up impossible conditions. We could wish that the first loan had been under different auspices: Mr. Fred F. French, who will get the money, has heretofore taken no interest in housing for the poor, and his new project, with average rentals of $12.50 per month per room, is beyond the reach of those who are in the worst need of rehousing. His project also involves rehabilitation of a slum area in New York City which is of dubious economic value to say the least, and is conducted with no regard for desirable policy under city and regional planning (except that the new houses will be near Wall Street, and it is expected that some of the residents will work there). Nevertheless, the project will give employment to 10,000 men for a year, it will be supervised by the New York State Board of Housing and it will do away with the notorious "lung block," a slum which earned its name through the prevalence of tuberculosis there. We hope that the R.F.C., having made this start, will now proceed to additional housing loans which are more in accord with the best thought in this field.

ONE of the most important jobs in Washington is also one of the least known: that of Solicitor of the Interior Department. This department is the custodian of much of the nation's wealth, and the Solicitor is its chief law officer. A vigilant Solicitor could probably have prevented the oil scandals of the Harding regime. It is part of the job to safeguard the properties of all Indians, the national parks, all public lands, various huge reclamation projects and, in most respects, the entire territory of Alaska. One of Mr. Roosevelt's most intelligent appointments has been the selection of Nathan R. Margold to serve as Solicitor under Secretary Ickes. Though a young man, Mr. Margold has already had a brilliant career and one of distinguished public service. There is every reason to believe that the affairs of the Department, and particularly of Uncle Sam's Indian wards, will be better administered now than they have been since the mind of man runneth not to the contrary.

GERMANY is not the only country where writers and artists are being arrested, and where the government is doing its best to restore an age of cultural barbarism. Last year the Japanese government determined to suppress the revolutionary cultural movement, under the terms of the Dangerous Thoughts Law—an anti-Communist measure which, incidentally, is similar in its provisions to the Eslick Bill, favorably reported during the last session of our Congress. More than 6,000 Japanese were arrested last year under the terms of this law. More than one hundred of those imprisoned and tortured were writers, dramatists, actors, directors and painters. The climax of this campaign against culture was reached on February 20 with what seems to have been the deliberate murder of Takiji Kobayashi, perhaps the most talented of the younger Japanese novelists. One hour after his arrest by the Tokio police, they announced that he had died of "heart failure"—a disease which is mysteriously prevalent among radicals, once they have disappeared behind the silent walls of the Tokio police headquarters. Kobayashi, who was twenty-nine years old, was the author of eight novels, many of which had attained a wide circulation. "The Cannery Boat," which has been translated into several languages, including English, is his best known work outside of Japan, but his next book, "The Absentee Landlord," is said to be more highly regarded in his own country. Kobayashi was the son of a tenant farmer, and his books dealt for the most part with the working-class life he had known during his childhood. His death is a disaster to the intellectual life of Japan.

To Halt Deflation of Labor

HAVING asked representatives of the farmers to meet with the Secretary of Agriculture and his economic staff to form a program for reversing deflation in agriculture, and having pushed in Congress the measures recommended, the President has now gone on, through the agency of his Secretary of Labor, to hold a conference of representatives of the workers to see what could be done to halt the disastrous deflation of labor. This is a logical procedure, from many points of view. For the emergency purpose of halting the depression, it seeks to establish a bottom for deflation by peg-

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ging the incomes of those who have suffered most.

A deflation in which all incomes, costs and prices are reduced equally can get us nowhere; it will not restore any economic balance from which advance is possible. A deflation in which the least protected and the lowest incomes suffer the most is a descending spiral which continually worsens the situation. It is necessary to revise capital structures, to reduce fixed costs, to cut the burden of mortgage and bonded indebtedness, to slash the prices which have fallen least. But at the same time it is necessary to build a solid foundation on which expanded activity can rest. This bottom can be nothing less than the purchasing power of the majority of the population. The purchasing power for goods may be increased by falling prices of those goods, but only if the incomes of the purchasers are not simultaneously reduced.

To halt the deflation of labor is also necessary as a complement to the agricultural program. It was well to begin with agriculture, since farm prices have fallen most of all. But it will not be enough to increase the purchasing power of farmers for industrial products if at the same time the purchasing power of industrial wage earners continues to sink. The wage earners can well afford to pay slightly higher prices for food if at the same time their own incomes are increased, but not otherwise. It is argued by the advocates of the farm bill that to raise the prices which farmers receive will enlarge the demand for industrial products and so provide more employment and higher wage incomes. But it is well to take active measures to see that this benefit is actually conferred on the city consuming public. Otherwise the farmers themselves will derive no lasting benefit from the new deal.

Finally, this procedure is important as a beginning of long-range planning. Farmers and wage earners, through their accredited representatives, must coöperate in making suggestions and administering experiments for the reorganization of their respective industries, if the technique of economic planning is to be learned—as it must be learned—by coöperative effort and action.

Suggestions of the labor leaders included a number of proposals made many times before—additional expenditures for direct relief, protection of relief standards, a large public-works program (it was demonstrated that billions of dollars could immediately be spent on needed public works, which are ready to go ahead if only the money can be found), ratification, after these many years, of the Child Labor Amendment, shorter hours by law, mortgage relief for home owners, advance of the several kinds of labor legislation now under consideration by the states. But it is uncertain how large a public-works program the government can now finance, and the other measures, though desirable, offer no direct and prompt way of raising the total wage income, or even of keeping it where it is. The most valuable suggestion of all, looking to genuine reorganization of the labor market, was that by Sidney Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers for the establishment of labor boards to regulate wages, hours and conditions in all industries where these are now beyond collective control. To the details of this proposal we shall revert in a moment.

In the first two years of the depression it was proved impossible under the circumstances, and in a system like ours, to keep wages up to the prosperity level—especially by means of such informal promises as Mr. Hoover elicited from his conference of business men. The program of maintaining prices, costs and incomes in industry, as if the only thing which had happened to the world were a collapse of stock-market speculation, scored a miserable failure. With the recognition of that failure, a vigorous attack on wages began. The slogan of many employing and banking interests became that labor could only benefit in the end by reduced rates, for more men could be employed if the price of labor were lowered. To get business you had to reduce costs; to reduce costs, you had to reduce wages.

It took no strong argument to induce employers to act on this policy, especially when their capital was threatened, when they had to omit dividends or even face default on interest. In the more competitive industries, wages have since got entirely out of any control. Wage rates have been cut again and again, and cuts are accepted perforce because of the threat of the growing labor surplus on the breadlines. Hours have been lengthened to barbarous limits. Standards of working conditions established by many years of struggle have disappeared. Child labor has come back; sweatshops have come back. Many workers are not receiving enough to sustain themselves at a minimum of subsistence. Miss Perkins showed the conference that, in manufacturing industries, weekly wages in January, 1932, averaged only $16.68, while in some industries the average was as low as $10. There are cases on record of a garment worker receiving $1 in full payment for two weeks' work with overtime. Yet the cutting of costs and wages has not, as predicted, resulted in increased employment. On the contrary, the unemployment rolls have grown apace with the wage slashing. This theory also is now discredited. But individual workers, and even many employers, can do nothing about it. They are ground in the competitive struggle.

The expectation of larger sales and increased employment resulting from lower wage costs might be sound if one concern or industry alone acted upon it while the rest continued to pay as much as before. That concern or industry would gain a competitive advantage. But with the general level of wage income sinking, markets shrink as rapidly as do costs. The whole body of wage earners as consumers have less money with which to pay the lower prices. When the purchasing power of wage incomes gets so low that nothing beyond the bare essentials of

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life can be bought, and even these sparingly, what hope is there of reviving markets for automobiles or houses or the miscellaneous products which form a larger part of industry's output in modern times than ever before?

National or state laws limiting the number of hours of work will provide no remedy for this situation unless wages also are controlled. Otherwise they would be merely "share-work" measures which will lead to reduction of income along with hours. The conference endorsed the Black bill for a thirty-hour week, just reported favorably by the Senate, but this will be of no use unless wage rates are safeguarded.

Sidney Hillman's proposal called upon the President to recommend to Congress, as part of his emergency program, that the Secretary of Labor be required to set up a Labor Board in any industry in which he deemed it necessary. Industries in which wages, hours and conditions are already controlled by collective agreements, such as printing, railroads or building, are to be exempted if the parties concerned do not desire to make use of the new machinery. But in other industries such boards are to be created by the nomination of an equal number of representatives by employers and labor, and the appointment, by the Secretary of Labor, of public representatives, who will act as chairmen. They are to have power over wages, hours and working conditions, and may also set up machinery to safeguard wage security through unemployment reserves.

Constitutional questions are of course involved, but if there is general recognition of the necessity of such legislation, a way may be found to circumvent them—either through the federal power over interstate commerce or the general police power. It is not the business of statesmen in an emergency like this to be too timid in suggesting essential measures, for fear the courts will negate them.

To administer such a system successfully, organization of labor is of course necessary. But experience has shown that where machinery of this kind exists, it is relatively easy to organize labor and keep the organization effective. This was proved during the War, and it has worked well since the War in industries like railroads. Employers cannot, under such a system, prevent the formation of unions to elect representatives and present their demands to the boards. By giving organized labor a constitutional status in industry and a function to perform, machinery of this kind makes organization possible. This would perhaps be the greatest permanent gain to be anticipated—it would provide the basis for an active and revivified labor movement.

The Conference discussed the proposal favorably and appointed a committee to work it out, consisting of William Green of the A. F. of L., A. F. Whitney of the Railroad Brotherhoods, Sidney Hillman and Rose Schneiderman of the Women's Trade Union League. It is to be hoped that this committee will act promptly and vigorously. Whereas Hoover made the mistake of pegging capital values and letting farm and wage incomes slide, this measure attacks the depression from the other end. It is an experiment which must be tried.

Beer, Graft or Politics

FOR THIRTEEN years, intelligent Americans have known that there was at least a possibility that prohibition would some day be repealed. For thirteen years there has been general agreement that the conditions which prevailed in the pre-prohibition era were undesirable and ought not to be repeated. Yet the partial abolition of prohibition which has come with the new beer law has not only found the country wholly unprepared to wrestle with the problems it creates, but it has seen all the undesirable forces which were dominant in the old days still in the field and intent upon regaining their power. Added to them, of course, is the racketeer, who gives every evidence of being determined to stay, no matter what happens to the liquor traffic, which is still his most important single source of revenue.

If common sense were the sole consideration, it would seem obvious that the way to handle the liquor traffic or any part thereof would be for the government to become the sole manufacturer and wholesaler of every form of brewed, distilled or fermented alcoholic liquor. This would ensure high standards of quality without unreasonably high (or low) prices. The government would have no interest, as private manufacturers inevitably do, in forcing upon the country an unduly large and steadily increasing per-capita consumption. It would not seek, as the brewers and distillers once did, to dominate local politics for their own ends. It would not bribe local officials to wink at law violations, as was the almost universal practice of the saloon, nor would it extend its operations into the allied occupations of gambling, drug-selling and prostitution. Under such a plan the government would get not only the amount it now acquires in taxes, but the manufacturer's profit, the wholesaler's profit and, to a large extent, the retailer's as well. Liquor would be sold, as it is in Canada and certain European countries, at government liquor stores, in original packages to be consumed off the premises; or it would be sold by the glass in hotels, restaurants and other suitable places, under carefully restricted conditions.

This plan is probably too sensible for anyone to expect America to adopt it. There is a better chance, however, for a modification of it—government sale in original packages, though not government manufacture. This is the plan which is in operation in some provinces of Canada, and thousands of Americans can testify from first-hand experience in that country that it works well. It is the plan which seems to be best received in those European countries which do not follow a policy of complete

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laissez-faire. There is every reason why those Americans who do not want a return to the old evils should agitate for it, lest the repeal of prohibition should find us napping as the legalization of beer has done.

For the immediate present, however, there seems little hope of getting any sort of intelligent control in the social interest. New York's melancholy experience seems to be fairly typical of what is happening over the country. Governor Lehman, arguing that his state would set an example which would probably be widely copied, proposed an intelligent plan which would have prevented the return of the saloon, and would have put control in the hands of a non-political state board. Immediately, however, Tammany politicians from New York City and equally venal Republicans from upstate attacked the Governor's proposal. They wanted local, political supervision, with plenty of opportunity for corruption and graft. This is the example which seems likely to be followed throughout the country, rather than Governor Lehman's plan, and regardless of the outcome of the fight in the Empire State.

The situation creates a peril for the repeal of prohibition itself. It is by no means certain that the necessary thirty-six states will endorse the abolition of the Eighteenth Amendment during the next few months. Despite the optimism engendered by the Literary Digest poll and other straw votes, there is still a good deal of prohibition sentiment in many states, especially in the West and South. The handling of beer is doing anything but reassure wavering souls who have not yet made up their minds which way they will vote. Not only is it bad in itself, but it is the worst possible augury as to what may be expected when repeal becomes effective. When the states are showing themselves so incompetent to deal with beverages containing 3.2 percent of alcohol, what shall we look for when whisky, rum, gin and other potent spirits are again legal? If they only knew it, the corrupt politicians are working to prevent repeal and prolong the reign of bootlegger and speakeasy.

The Florida Chain Store Case

THE MAN who more than three years ago is reported to have declared that "the depression of 1929" would be known in history as "the panic of 1933" has lately given further proof —were any needed—of his prophetic insight into the workings of our economic system. This time he speaks not in private dinner-table conversation, but in a forum more familiar to the public—a dissenting opinion in the United States Supreme Court. Mr. Justice Brandeis' opinion in the Florida chain-store tax case is a document of permanent importance.

There is no mystery about what the issues in the case were, or how they were decided. The controversy concerned, not the usual provision of chain-store tax legislation stepping up the fee according to the number of stores operated in the state under common management (that feature of the statute had been before the Court two years ago in the Indiana chain-store tax case, and was again sustained), but a special provision placing in a separate bracket chains extending over more than one county and subjecting them to a special tax similarly graduated, but more severe. This feature the Court pronounced unconstitutional. Two Justices dissented: Mr. Justice Brandeis, and Mr. Justice Cardozo—with whom Mr. Justice Stone concurred.

Taken together, the three opinions epitomize the swirling controversies of approach and method, of understanding and judgment, that agitate the Court. The method of Mr. Justice Roberts is in the tradition of unreality of too much of our constitutional law. He might have been speaking of an imaginary statute in an imaginary state. Suppose, he said, that an existing chain wholly within a county decides to open a new store "a few feet over a county line." An increase in the levy consequent upon this "mere physical fact . . . finds no foundation in reason"—no more than if any other "arbitrary line" were drawn through the state regardless of county boundaries.

Mr. Justice Cardozo's answer is short and demolishing. The Florida legislature was not dealing with any such hypothetical situation. In Florida there are two types of chains—those confined to single localities, and those that are sectional or even national in scope. Counties are not "arbitrary lines" but distinctive units of local government, and local businesses in point of fact keep within them. Between these two types of enterprise there is a real and substantial difference. "The business that keeps at home affects the social organism in ways that differ widely from those typical of a business that goes out into the world. . . . When a chain goes beyond the county, beyond the traditional boundaries of local government, it puts the locality behind it, and elects to play for larger stakes." And for that privilege the state may exact a price, even though the Supreme Court does not like it.

Mr. Justice Brandeis' answer is more sweeping. With a wealth of citation he places the controversy in its setting in American life, develops the historical background, points the implications, and —with any other than a Supreme Court majority —fairly compels the conclusion. Plainly in this case, as in the Ice Case dissent last year, the Justice, profoundly moved by the spectacle of economic disintegration about him, is seeking by every resource within his power to bring the Court— and the public no less—to a realization of its own relation to the disaster, and to the issues which arise out of it.

But it is essential not to misunderstand. Mr. Justice Brandeis is not preaching the desirability of requiring a certificate of public convenience and

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necessity to engage in the ice business; he is not advocating chain-store taxes of any character. If he were, The New Republic would strongly oppose his views, since this paper believes that the attempt to destroy the chains through state taxation, and for the benefit of their small-unit competitors, is bad economics and therefore unwise social policy. Mr. Justice Brandeis tells us only that these are the methods, or the sort of methods, by which a serious body of American opinion believes that our economic chaos may be reduced to order and control—if at all. Whether that is possible, no one knows, perhaps least of all the Supreme Court. It is not its function to know, or to say. Real knowledge is to be gained only through action; and it is folly to interpret the Constitution as foreclosing any promising avenue of effort.

Mr. Justice Brandeis bases the power of the state to levy the tax upon its power over these plaintiffs, as corporations, and its power to use taxation as an instrument of public policy. He details the limitations that have historically been placed upon the privilege of doing business as a corporation, and describes the breakdown of effective regulation as a result of the "traffic in corporate charters" engaged in by such states as Delaware and New Jersey:

> Able, discerning scholars have pictured for us the economic and social results of thus removing all limitations upon the size and activities of business corporations and of vesting in their managers vast powers once exercised by stockholders—results not designed by the states and long unsuspected. They show that size alone gives to giant corporations a social significance not attached ordinarily to smaller units of private enterprise. Through size, corporations, once merely an efficient tool employed by individuals in the conduct of private business, have become an institution—an institution that has brought such concentration of economic power that so-called private corporations are sometimes able to dominate the state. . . . Other writers have shown that, coincident with the growth of these giant corporations, there has occurred a marked concentration of individual wealth; and that the resulting disparity in incomes is a major cause of the existing depression. Such is the Frankenstein which the states have created by their corporation laws.

With impressive force this background is brought to bear upon the case at hand. The majority of the Court were convinced by imaginary facts. Mr. Justice Brandeis is dealing with actual ones:

> Two hundred non-banking corporations, each with assets in excess of $90 million, control directly about one-fourth of all our national wealth . . . Among these 200 . . . are five of the fifteen plaintiffs. These five have in the aggregate $820 million of assets; and they operate, in the several states, an aggregate of 19,718 stores. A single one of these giants operates nearly 16,000. Against these plaintiffs, and other owners of multiple stores, the individual retailers of Florida are engaged in a struggle to preserve their independence —perhaps a struggle for existence. The citizens of the state, considering themselves vitally interested in this seemingly unequal struggle, have undertaken to aid the individual retailers by subjecting the owners of multiple stores to the handicap of higher license fees. They may have done so merely in ord r to preserve competition. But their purpose may have been a broader and deeper one. They may have believed that the chain store, by furthering the concentration of wealth and of power and by promoting absentee ownership, is thwarting American ideals; that it is making impossible equality to opportunity; that it is converting independent tradesmen into clerks; and that it is sapping the resources, the vigor and the hope of the smaller cities and towns.

Mr. Justice Brandeis has brought his depth of economic insight to the service of political insight in the decision of constitutional controversies. In these tragic times signs are not wanting that his lessons are being driven home. Railroad and utility lawyers are reflecting upon his famous warning of 1923 that a return to pre-war price levels was a probability within the decade; and that constitutional doctrines concerning the proper elements of valuation for rate-making purposes should be shaped with the possibility in view. In the Florida chain-store tax case itself the majority did not deny him directly, as once they might have done. They said that the statute was not in terms aimed at large corporate chains, and refused to consider what result might follow had the purpose been declared (a novel and astonishing requisite of constitutional validity).

Such detachment from reality will be increasingly difficult to maintain in the years to come, as the unprecedented and drastic measures daily being adopted by legislatures to cope with unprecedented and drastic situations begin to be presented for adjudication. The Supreme Court has committed itself to many fair-weather doctrines. The wonder is that it has not yet begun to feel the weight of its own shackles. When it does so, the critical question will be whether, and how soon, it will be able to rid itself of them.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHTED, 1933, IN THE U. S., BY NEW REPUBLIC, INC., 421 WEST 21ST STREET, NEW YORK CITY. BRUCE BLIVEN, PRESIDENT. DANIEL MEBANE, TREASURER.

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Food in Russia

I: *Food and Politics*

The present extremely serious food situation in Russia makes particularly timely the series of articles of which this is the first. Mr. Kunitz, who is an American of Russian parentage and speaks Russian fluently, has just returned from an extensive tour of the Soviet Union, lasting several months.

In his second article, to appear soon, he discusses food and industrialization.—THE EDITORS.

FOOD HAS gradually become the central problem in the Soviet Union. It is no exaggeration to say that food has been at the bottom of the ruthless political struggle that has raged within the Communist ranks during the last five years, that it has determined the character of the first and second Five Year Plans, and that it has been the basic reason for most of the stringent decrees now being issued by the Bolshevik government. To understand the food situation in Soviet Russia is to understand most of what is going on there at the present time.

Food is uppermost in the minds of the urban population. Most people think food and talk food to an extent bordering on the morbid. Untold energy is consumed in efforts to obtain it—in rushing from one coöperative to another, waiting in endless lines, elbowing one's way through the open market, bartering, bargaining. As soon as any food article appears in the coöperative or on the market, it vanishes regardless of price. Impelled by what often appears a hunger psychology, people store up sugar, salt, canned goods, fats, flour and what-not. When there are things to eat, people tend to eat more than they normally would. One constantly thinks about food; and one grows inordinately hungry.

I do not wish to create a wrong picture. Though there are serious food difficulties, the Russians are not starving. It is my impression that the average Russian worker and peasant, the average Russian boy and girl, do not look less healthy and energetic than do people in other countries; and vital statistics seem to confirm my impression. To a large degree, the "hunger" is more psychological than real, and is caused chiefly by the difficulty of obtaining foodstuffs, scarcity of certain types of products, monotony of diet, increased demands, fear. This does not wholly apply to the leading sections of the population—to the millions of party members, young Communists, pioneers, engineers, technicians, scientists, explorers, writers, artists, actors, revolutionary workers. They have their compensations: they are busy, they are thrilled, they are "functioning energetically" in shaping a new world. This applies more to the average, non-Communist Soviet citizen, the citizen who is no hero and no enthusiast, but just an ordinary, normal being with ordinary, normal desires for more and better food and a modicum of comfort. The extent to which he gets them is the standard by which he judges the success or failure of governmental policies. The less he eats, the greater hardships he endures, the more inclined is he, under conditions of one-party rule, to swing in his sympathies to either the right or the left side of the party's "general line."

During a recent journey from Leningrad to Moscow I happened to get into conversation with two "ordinary citizens" who sat with me in the same compartment. As usual their talk turned to food. Could we in America buy as much food as we wished? How much bread did the American worker get per day? And meat? And sugar? And milk? I tried to explain to my fellow travelers that in America we had a superabundance of foodstuffs, but that on account of unemployment millions of workers could not afford to buy all they needed and many were actually starving. Ignoring the last part of my explanation, one of the Russians, a glum and angry-looking man, drew his own rather illogical conclusions: "Sure," he said, "in the capitalist countries they have plenty. But here, we are building socialism. The harder we work, the less we eat. Here we are being fed on *piatiletkas* and *kolhozi!*" This reminded the other of the "ordinary citizens," a fellow with a pug-nose and a humorous cast of mind, of a riddle which he forthwith tried on me, "to test your grasp of Soviet politics," as he expressed it.

> Ordinary Citizen: What kind of policy is this: everything for the city, nothing for the village?
>
> Answer: Left deviation.
>
> O.C: And everything for the village, nothing for the city?
>
> Answer: Right deviation.
>
> O.C.: And nothing for the city and nothing for the village?
>
> Answer: The general line of the party.

I quote these Russians, not because of the soundness of their criticism, but because they illustrate the present attitude of the average "ordinary citizen." Of course, in the Soviet Union, "ordinary citizens" do not mold the policies. It is the Communists who do. Even Communists, however, do not function in a void. The emotions, thoughts, reactions of the "ordinary citizen" are communicated to them and reflected through them in the various currents and cross-currents of the party.

It is significant that before the First Five

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Year Plan, during the period of kulak intransigence and food scarcity, great numbers of ordinary citizens had flocked to the extreme Left. It was then that Trotskyism, with its harsh attitude towards the village, constituted a serious "danger" to the party. Later, when the Piatiletka was about to be launched and another food shortage, caused by hasty industrialization and collectivization, began to loom up, many more people, including former Trotskyites, threw themselves in the opposite direction—to the Right, to Bukharin. Right deviation then became the supreme "danger." Many people felt that the kulak, irrespective of the party's objections to him, was after all the best producer in the village, and that if he were permitted to prosper the food problem would be solved. The remarks of my fellow traveler suggest that in 1933 the Right deviation is still the greatest "danger" confronting the Communist party in the Soviet Union.

A survey of conditions in the food-producing village, before and after the October Revolution, will throw some light on the complex forces that determined the character of the "general line" of the party, of the First Five Year Plan, the collectivization campaign of 1929 and the present (second) Five Year Plan.

The Tsar's regime bequeathed to the Bolsheviki a backward and ruined land. Agriculture was primitive and, judged by Western standards, unprofitable. Famine and bad crops were endemic. The vast exports of grain under the old regime had been possible, not because of a genuine surplus, but because the peasants were starved. Most of the marketable output available for the city and export trade came from the large estates. Sixty percent of the population were the "village poor," that is, they were "people who usually had not enough seed, or horses, or equipment, or else suffered from the lack of all these things taken together" (Stalin).

When, after the October Revolution, everything in the village that could be redistributed had been redistributed, 40 percent of the peasants remained without horses, 32 percent without plows, and 70 percent received plots of less than eleven acres. The peasants were so hungry for land that the economically deleterious process of splitting up large and even medium-sized households into poorly equipped small-sized ones could not be stopped. The number of peasant households increased from 18.6 millions in 1914 to over 26 millions in 1927. The output of the small-sized farms was rising only slowly, and, owing to increased peasant consumption, most of it sank in the village. Little was left for the city, and practically nothing for the exports which were essential if credits were to be obtained abroad.

After ten years of fluctuating policies in the village, the Bolsheviki found themselves in a blind alley. The population was growing, the city was growing, industry was growing, but agriculture, because of wasteful and primitive methods, poverty, ignorance and lack of implements, scarcely reached the pre-war level. In the city a highly modernized, centralized, planned state industry was gaining momentum, while in the country the farms were waxing in numbers but waning in size and in productive power. The demands for food were expanding, the food-producing potentialities contracting. As for agricultural planning, this was altogether out of the question.

This economic contradiction brought in its wake a social contradiction. The steady differentiation of the peasantry into rich and poor, stimulated by the New Economic Policy (1921-28), was a constant challenge to the principles of communism and a menace to the very existence of the Soviet state. On the one hand, the rich peasant, the so-called kulak, seemed indispensable, for he was the only peasant who, by leasing land, hiring labor and using some modern implements, produced the surplus grain with which to feed the urban population. On the other hand, if conditions remained unchanged, the kulak, by being at the source of food, was in a position to dictate terms to the government. The disquieting proof of his growing power was the "grain strike" of the fall of 1927 and the winter of 1928.

Trotsky's demand for a struggle with the kulak was sound, but purely negative. He offered no practical way of resolving the problem. Bukharin's demand that the village be let alone and his advice to the individual peasant to "enrich himself," was a form of quiescence inspired by a dread of the peasant and the specter of hunger. Although his only aim was more food for the city and for industry, Bukharin represented objectively the interests of the kulak.

The party, under the leadership of Stalin, argued that the only way of resolving the contradiction was a rapid development of Russia's industries and a rapid collectivization of Russia's agriculture.

The argument was that the Soviet Union needs more bread, without which all talk of progress, of consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat or building a socialist society would be futile. For centuries the condition of Russian agriculture has been so hopelessly wretched that a substantial increase in Soviet crops postulates a sweeping agricultural revolution. Industrialization would give Russia machines, tractors, combines, trucks. Large-scale collective farming would make possible not only the introduction of these machines, but also scientific management and centralized planning in agriculture. True, rapid industrialization might involve hardships—export of oil, lumber, furs and, if necessary, even foodstuffs—but it would be worth while. In the final analysis, importation of machines to make machines would be the cheapest, most rational, indeed, the only way of creating a

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solid basis for the reconstruction of Russian's medieval agriculture Therefore the Union must apply every ounce of energy toward the speedy development of its heavy industries.

As for collectivization, this, too, could be accomplished. Forty percent of the peasants had no draft animals; 24 percent leased horses from the kulaks, 32 percent had no plows. It should be relatively easy to convince these peasants of the desirability of tractors, trucks and modern implements, to prove to them the advantages of large-scale mechanized agriculture and of the scientifically managed, model state farms. The peasant would naturally tend to pool his land and other resources in order to buy agricultural machinery. Furthermore, it might make collectivization more attractive if peasants, joining collective farms, should be offered preferential treatment in taxes, credits and manufactured products. It might even be expedient to minister to the self-interest of the poor and middle peasant by expropriating the lands and livestock of the kulaks and handing them over to the collective farms.

Collectivization would solve the social problem in the village. It would eliminate the kulak and liberate the many millions of toiling peasants from ignorance and poverty. Morever it would bring Russia closer to the communist ideal of a classless society. It would make planning possible not only in agriculture but in industry. Above all, by using everything that science and rational organization offer, it would produce more grain, more bread, more food for the city worker.

Crushing opposition on all sides and inspiring the masses of workers and poor peasants with immense enthusiasm, the party has succeeded in accomplishing, in a little over four years, some of the main objectives of the five-year program. Russia has become industrialized, its agriculture collectivized. Onslaughts from the Left and the Right notwithstanding, the party stands united, unshaken, ready for the next advance. Stalin has emerged victorious. The "general line," it appears, has triumphed. The bitterest enemies of Stalin's policy—Bukharin, Rykov, Tomsky—are publicly admitting their mistakes, flatly denouncing the Right opposition, and enthusiastically acclaiming his great leadership in bringing the Five Year Plan to a successful completion. Cynics suggest that Bukharin's, Rykov's and Tomsky's recantations were prompted by a fear of expulsion from the party. Less cynical Russians suggest that it was due to a sincere Bolshevik realization of the seriousness of the present situation, the impossibility of turning back, and the imperative need of presenting a solid front against the tide of dissatisfaction which the present difficulties might generate.

In both suggestions, however, the inescapable implication is that the recantation of the Right leaders does not prove that the objective causes of the Right opposition have disappeared, or that the "general line" of the party, particularly as regards food, has been a complete success.

As has been frequently pointed out to me by Stalin's critics in Russia, the per-capita grain production in the Soviet Union has been decreasing. In 1928 it was lower than in the average pre-war year; and in 1929 it was even lower than in 1928. It is true that in 1930 there was an unprecedented rise of per-capita production, but this declined in 1931 and 1932. While the average annual production of grain has increased as compared with pre-war years, it has not kept up with the growth of the population, nor has it at any time reached the figures given in the Plan.

To confute its critics, defenders of the party "line" often refer to the figures given in the Berliner Tageblatt by A. A. Kissin, representative of Russia's Consumers' Coöperatives at the London Grain Conference. According to him, the situation in the U.S.S.R. is characterized by the following figures of production, export and consumption per-capita in centners (220.46 pounds):

	1909-1913	*1930-1931*
Production per-capita	1.4	1.7
Internal consumption	1.1	1.5
Exports per-capita	0.3	0.2

These figures show that at least for the period of 1930-31, as compared with pre-war years, per-capita production and consumption have increased while exports have decreased. Whereas Tsarist Russia used to export over 850 million rubles' worth of foodstuffs yearly, the Soviet Union in its most prosperous year and with a crop much greater than the average crop in pre-war Russia, exported no more than 354 million rubles' worth of food products. Whereas in Tsarist Russia foodstuffs constituted 60 percent of the total exports (1,500 million rubles), in the Soviet Union 37.3 percent of a much smaller total (in 1931) was the highest percentage ever reached.

The fact that one year after collectivization the per-capita production and consumption exceeded those of pre-war days is, to the defenders of the Five Year Plan and collectivization, proof positive of the great possibilities of collectivization. The decline of 1931-32 is not, they feel, due to any fault inherent in collectivization. Drouths and war scares are as yet unavoidable. And the mistakes perpetrated by the Communists in the Ukraine and Northern Caucasus, when in a moment of war panic they forced the peasants to give them more grain and seeds than the latter could afford, were also not in any way attributable to collectivization. Sustained by the example of 1930, the Communists look hopefully to 1933-34 as the real test of collectivization. A more detailed analysis of the effect of industrialization and collectivization on Russia's food problem, as well as an account of the measures taken to remedy the present evils, will be given in subsequent articles.

JOSHUA KUNITZ.

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The Nazi Terror

The following article is by an American who has lived many years in Germany. His name is withheld for fear of reprisals by the Hitlerite dictatorship. An article by him, "Eye-Witness in Berlin," appeared in The New Republic of April 5. —THE EDITORS.

IT SEEMS too bad that the real heroics of revolution have disappeared; in the old days they made the bloody business more romantic. The mock heroics that characterize the Nazis are no prettier than any other aspect of what is now going on in Germany. This latest style in revolutions is not embellished with barricade fighting, and heroic exposure to danger plays no part. Action, instead of taking place in the streets, is now largely confined to the Storm Troops' barracks.

Direct evidence is difficult to procure; the newspapers publish nothing except for certain hints which have appeared in one or two of the journals that are friendly to the government (although not associated with it), and therefore allowed to remonstrate. The stories in circulation are so widespread, however, and so often repeated that even though it is impossible to obtain verification in view of the rigid censorship, there is good reason to believe that many of the reports are substantially true.

At the end of the Friedrichstrasse, not far from the Socialist headquarters, is one of the Storm Troop barracks. For several days during the week after the elections the neighbors and passers-by heard the screams and moans of people inside, until at last demands were made that the regular police take action. The police broke into the place and in the barracks they found seventy Communists, some dead, some nearly dead, and all badly beaten. In the Hedemannstrasse barracks there are said to be more than two hundred and fifty Communists imprisoned. In Berlin and throughout Germany it is difficult to estimate how many defenseless people have been put to death by torture. Even Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht were killed outright.

It is still correct to call the latest German revolution a process, but for a time following the elections events had more the appearance of an explosion. From the rapidity and violence of the changes one can realize how overripe the revolution was. The black future during the post-war period had piled up a vast amount of discontent. The dam has now broken and at present it looks as though the labor movement were being washed away. Freedom of speech, press and assembly were swamped at the very start.

However, there is in Germany at least one prerequisite which America, for example, has not yet got—an active and self-conscious labor movement. Germany has had one for many decades. Over against this, in many respects growing out of the same soil, there has been the revolutionary movement of the Right, the National Socialist German Worker's party. There seemed to be no reason why these two antagonistic forces should not go on for an indefinite period canceling each other out, except for one fact, and a paradoxical one—the Nazis were beginning to slip. The men in the ranks had been living on promises too long, and they were starting to melt away for lack of real political nourishment, namely, action.

Although it is perhaps not known to the National Socialists themselves, and although they voted against the government, it was really they who provided the basis of popular support for the von Papen government last summer and early fall. At that time the strongest pillar of the coalition was beginning to buckle, and something had to be done. Von Papen and Hugenberg arranged to have Hitler appointed Chancellor, with a small minority of three seats in the Cabinet. This was the substitute for action which would hold together the wavering Nazi ranks; it would revive the flagging spirits of the followers who had been faithful for so long with so little reward. Moreover, it would check the voting power of the Communists.

The struggle for power started at once. The Nazis planned to outlaw the Communist party immediately, but they were checked in this by their allies, who wanted the counter-weight. At any rate the conservatives were rushed off their feet; perhaps somewhat willingly, since there was no telling how much they themselves might win. If they could have foreseen the election results it is likely there would have been no elections. As it was, the National Socialist party emerged apparently in a state of irresistible strength.

A recent and important development is taking place at the other end of the political front —the fight for the trade unions. Still another important phase is the general economic plan. During the next few weeks it may be possible to decide whether the Fascist revolution is going through to completion. Not only this, but if Fascism comes, present events will indicate how serious may be its defects. The Western World may be entering a new dark age, as the Mediterranean world did fifteen hundred years ago. But on the other hand, Fascism may not last forever, because it may now be developing within itself explosive elements which will eventually destroy it.

Berlin. Y. K. W.

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The Jews in Fascist Germany

WHEN Reich Minister Göring, Commissioner for the Prussian Ministry of the Interior, declared in a pre-election speech that "it is not the function of the Prussian police to protect Jewish storekeepers," he served notice on the Jew in Germany that the Hitler government looks on him as an outlaw in the German nation. This broad hint, emanating from the highest official circles, was enough to inflame the Storm Troops, already drunk with enthusiasm over the success of their leader, to open excesses. During the first weeks of February, after the appointment of Adolf Hitler to the chancellorship, there were sporadic anti-Jewish acts of violence. After the Göring speech they grew in number and brutality to such an extent that already three foreign governments have protested through diplomatic channels against outrages perpetrated on Jewish citizens of the respective countries who were visiting or living in Germany. The United States intervened through Ambassador Sackett for nine Americans who had been abused and attacked by Storm Troopers, and received the assurance from Baron von Neurath that the guilty parties would be adequately punished. They were promptly indicted. But before judgment could be passed they were released under a general amnesty freeing all Nationalists who in their enthusiasm had overstepped the bounds of law and order.

It was inevitable that the Jews of Germany should be the first—after the labor movement—to feel the iron heel of National Socialist power. Of the confused and illogical demands that make up the ambitious program of that party, the anti-Semitic paragraphs alone offered an easy and immediate outlet for the energies of youthful Nazi followers. Jew-baiting had long been a favorite sport of the Storm detachments. To the starving German worker and the struggling tradesman the anti-Semitic program offered a promise of quick relief much closer to his comprehension than the vague near-Socialist theory the party and its government affect to espouse. To expel thousands of Jews from the country—that is a solution to his ills the common man can understand and appreciate, a program, moreover, that offers little difficulty in execution. Nor is this less true of thousands of intellectuals, physicians, lawyers, technicians, teachers, writers, actors and musicians who resent the competition of their Semitic colleagues. German retailers have suffered heavily from the inroads made on German trade by large department stores which are owned, according to National Socialist figures, largely by Jewish merchant princes. To them the Nazi program with its promise of immediate expropriation of all the department stores and the leasing of the various departments of these institutions to small businessmen, brings dreams of the good old days when the storekeeper, with a clerk or two, catered to a prosperous local trade and its familiar needs.

In those good old days, the Jews were not free from persecution. Germany and Saxony for decades spared no effort to stem the immigration of Jews from Russian Poland by regulations directed against its most vulnerable point, the family life of the incoming Jew. Long before the War only the children of those Jewish aliens who had come to Germany before 1882, when this legislation was passed, could acquire citizenship in Prussia. All Jewish immigrants arriving after this date were forced to renew their passports biennially. No single alien was permitted to found a family. If married he was forbidden to bring his family from its homeland in Russia, Poland or Austrian Galicia. Jews residing in Prussia had to give written promise that their sons would leave the country on or before their ninth birthday, and in many cases this regulation was brutally enforced under pitiful circumstances. With the outbreak of the World War the enforcement of these restrictions became even more severe. The Saxon Ministry for Education ordered the exclusion from its public schools of the children of alien enemies, a measure directed exclusively against the Russian Jews, most of whom had come to Saxony, attracted by its thriving fur and textile industries.

The Nazis try to make the world believe that Germany is overrun with Semites from the East to an extent that threatens its racial integrity. What are the actual facts? According to the "Statistische Jahrbuch für das Deutsche Reich," the ratio of Jewish to general population was:

1907	0.92%
1910	0.95%
1925	0.91%

In 1925, when the last census was taken, the total number of Jews in Germany was 564,379 out of a population of 62,410,619. These figures prove that the menace of the Eastern Jew and of the Jew in general in Germany is a myth bolstered up by the clever propaganda of the National Socialists. That it could become so astoundingly effective was indubitably due to the fact that the German Jew wields an economic power out of all proportion to his numbers, having been forced to develop traits that made him the forerunner and pacemaker of the modern capitalist.

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The Reich government appointed by President von Hindenburg on January 30 is headed by Chancellor Hitler, but it is largely made up of members and adherents of the German Nationalist People's party under the leadership of Dr. Alfred Hugenberg. The National Socialist German Labor party at first held only three ministerial posts (out of eleven) including the Chancellor; after the March 5 election the National Socialist group took an additional post in the Ministry. It is necessary to refer briefly to the political composition of the government because the anti-Semitism of the German Nationalists differs considerably from that of the Fascists. The Hugenberg party recruits its supporters from among important industrialist groups and from the large landholding Junker nobility. Hitler's party, though it, too, enjoys the financial support of powerful industrialists and aristocrats, is essentially the party of the petty bourgeoisie and the intellectual middle class, which look to it for tangible benefits from the expulsion of the Jews.

Hugenberg's party, though inherently the party of Prussian Junkerdom at its reactionary worst, used the anti-Semitic slogans of Stöcker, the famous missionary of anti-Semitism, to win petty-bourgeois and farmer support against the growing power of capitalism. Since then, under Hugenberg, it has made its peace with the capitalist class, particularly with influential sections of the heavy industries, the line of demarcation between the nobility and the wealthy bourgeoisie having disappeared to a considerable degree. Both its middle-class followers and its anti-Semitic program have been taken over by the National Socialists. Though anti-Semitism still persists in the Hugenberg party, it is neither so aggressive nor so vociferous as in the Nazi camp.

The fact that the National Socialists polled six times as many votes and elected almost six times as many representatives to the legislative bodies in all parts in the Reich has superseded any significance the Hugenberg majority in the Cabinet may originally have had. The Cabinet, moreover, gave tacit recognition to the factual supremacy of Nazi dictatorship from the start by turning over the control of the police, the judiciary and the appointment of the executive bureaucracy to its associates.

German civilization is living through a crisis of terrific magnitude. Millions are without employment. Tens of thousands of white-collar workers are vainly seeking jobs. By the tens of thousands, tradesmen and artisans have been ruined and the professions are crowded with young and old who are looking for bread. Behind these uprooted millions are other millions who have never worked, young people who learned trades and professions in which there is no work to be had, who grew into manhood without having experienced the joy of creative work, the stimulus of social labor; boys who were born into the misery of a war-wracked world, brought up in fatherless and motherless homes in which hunger and neglect were their daily companions. What wonder that, in this period of destruction in which work, the foundation of all social life, has become the privilege of the few, in which workingmen and women are drifting aimlessly through a miasma of political antagonisms, disappointed and disillusioned with the Social Democratic and the Communist parties, millions are turning to this new party as an expression of their bitter resentment with things as they are, easy victims of false and hollow catchwords? Humanity today is ripe for demagogy and false prophets. In Germany it clutched at anti-Semitism, the "Socialism of the benighted."

It was a foregone conclusion that the government created under the slogan, "Down with Marxism and the Jew!" should proceed at once after imprisoning tens of thousands of Communists and Socialists, suppressing their newspapers and periodicals and gagging the labor movement, to a crusade against the Jew. The world will probably never know how many Jews were murdered and disappeared in the fateful months of February and March, 1933. Not only have the authorities refused all information: censorship of the mails and of communications to the foreign press is being enforced by such rigorous measures that it has become possible to inform the world outside of happenings in Germany only with the greatest difficulty.

In Hanover the Reich Commissioner in the Prussian Ministry for Education and Culture, Dr. Rust, declared, on February 12, that "the public schools must be purged of all non-Germans and of all that is un-German. All that is not German must disappear from our primary and higher institutions of learning. I will strike it off with ruthless thoroughness within the terms of the law." Action followed upon words. Within two weeks 150 Jewish teachers and directors in high schools and other educational institutions were dismissed "as a preliminary measure." The same Minister issued a further ukase dismissing all Jewish physicians in municipal and state hospitals.

In the Staatsschauspielhaus in Berlin sixteen Jewish actors and actresses were dismissed without notice and the new National Socialist management instructed under no circumstances to engage Jewish talent. Among the actors thus summarily dismissed are some of the most important artists of the German stage. The Academy of Arts and Sciences in Berlin was officially advised to undergo a process of "self-purification" by the removal of Jews and other undesirable members. In consequence, Heinrich Mann and Käte Kollwitz, both Christians with radical convictions, resigned from the Academy.

It is too early to judge whether Chancellor Hitler, who was equipped, by the Reichstag decision of March 23 with powers more autocratic and dictatorial than those of the Japanese emperor or even Mussolini, believes the time ripe for the execution of that point in his program which states that "citizenship rights shall be granted only to those who are of German racial origin [*Volksgenossen*].

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Volksgenossen are those who are of German blood irrespective of religious affiliation. No Jew can be a *Volksgenosse*. The non-citizen shall live in Germany as an alien [guest] and shall be subject to the laws governing aliens. All further immigration of non-German elements shall cease. We demand, further, that all non-Germans who entered the Reich after August 1, 1914, shall be deported from German soil." It is quite possible that the government may be forced by the pressure of public opinion to a temporary moderation, determined haters of the Jews though its leaders undoubtedly are. In a collection of Hitler's speeches published in Munich by his party a short time ago and authorized by him, we find an address delivered on April, 1922, in which he says:

> . . . This race of capitalists, which first brought unscrupulous exploitation of men by men into the world, has been able to obtain control of the fourth estate by using its influence on the Left as well as on the Right, for it has its apostles in both camps. On the Right the wealthy Jew is carrying every harmful characteristic of our productive system to such extremes that the poor devil, the man of the people, must rise in righteous self-defense; greed, unscrupulousness, hardheartedness, noxious profit worship. More and more the Jews have wormed themselves into the best families; the result was that the leading elements of our nation became alienated from their own people. This was the premise of their work on the Left. For on the Left the Jew was a vulgar demagogue. He drove national intelligence from the leadership of labor in disgust, first, by his international point of view, secondly by his Marxian theories, by declaring that property as such is robbery. Along this path the economic intelligence of nationalist convictions could no longer follow. Thus the Jews were able, by an unscrupulous use of the press, to isolate this movement from all national elements.

The Hitler regime has rightly been called a Fascist dictatorship, for it recognizes and has adopted in the program of the National Socialist German Labor party the most important doctrines of Italian Fascism. Yet, fundamentally, anti-Semitism is not an essential of Fascist philosophy, notwithstanding the prominence it has been given by the German Fascist movement. Italian Fascism is not anti-Semitic. Its basic principles, supernationalism and insistence on a strongly centralized, anti-democratic government, are antagonistic to the Jewish point of view. By force of circumstances the Jew has become an internationalist, the champion of political liberty and democratic institutions. The name of Karl Marx is anathema to the Fascist as much because he personifies an internationalism opposed to nationalism as for his Jewish heritage. To the National Socialist, Bolshevism is a Jewish doctrine, a poison injected by an alien race into the life of his people.

In the final analysis, tragic and ghastly as is the lot of the Jew in Germany today, it represents but one aspect, though perhaps the most important one, of the problem that the German people and the world are facing. Anti-Semitism is nationalism's best ally. They are blood brothers; they belong together. A race which, without land and without concentrated material power, maintains its identity with such dogged persistence through the centuries is the living antithesis of nationalist ideology, that concept of the nation which is premised exclusively on political domination. Nationalism and anti-Semitism today outline the political picture of official Germany.

LUDWIG LORE.

American Fiction: The Major Trend

ALTHOUGH the realistic novel appeared in England in the middle of the eighteenth century and within a hundred years had made great advances in both England and France, it was not firmly established in the United States until after the Civil War. Our first three important novelists worked outside the realistic tradition. Cooper, influenced of course by Scott, introduced the romantic novel of frontier adventure, fathering a numerous but undistinguished branch of American fiction. Hawthorne, though an incomparably greater artist, left no direct descendants, perhaps because the very perfection of his delicate and bloodless allegories demonstrated the impossibility of further progress in that particular direction. Melville, too, stands alone, not merely our first but our only metaphysical novelist. The indirect influence of these men has doubtless been considerable; their direct influence has been slight.

For certainly, whether we consider numbers or distinction, it is the realistic tradition that has dominated American fiction. Realism, in the sense of the term that was current at the time in England and on the Continent, appears, after the Civil War, in the work of William Dean Howells and Henry James. But there were differences apparent in the first novels of the two men, and these differences defined two schools within the one tradition. For James's conception of realism much can be said, but the application of his theories, quite as much as temperamental predilections, took him abroad and alienated him from his native land. Howells was left, armed with a definite theory of the novel and a clear-cut program for the American artist. For three decades he dominated American literature; for half a century he was a figure to be reckoned with.

As Howells saw it, the task of the novelist was

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to reproduce as exactly as possible the kind of life he observed about him. To support his theories he drew, in critical discussion, upon a knowledge of his French and Russian contemporaries; but his own affiliations were with the English realists, from whom he selected Jane Austen for special admiration. He admired her because she wrote simply and exactly of the kind of experience she had known. That was what, all his life, he tried to do, first in his sketches of Italy, then in his sketches of Boston and Cambridge, then in his little novelettes of travel, and finally in such novels as "A Modern Instance," "The Rise of Silas Lapham" and "A Hazard of New Fortunes."

It is this attempt to describe what he regarded as central elements in American life that distinguishes him from many authors of his time. It separates him not only from Henry James, but also from the local-color writers. To this flourishing school Howells, seeing in its work an attempt to deal honestly with American realities, gave his blessing. To an extent he was right, but there was a distinction he should have made. Most of these local colorists, though professing adherence to the canons of fiction Howells had advocated, were actually writing, not about contemporary life in the various sections, but about the life that had gone on a generation before. The much discussed weaknesses of the local-color novels come not so much from their authors' provincialism as from their nostalgia, their refusal to contemplate the changing character of the section, their preoccupation with the glories of an earlier, pre-industrial age. To some of Eggleston's novels, to such a book as Howe's "Story of a Country Town," to Mary E. Wilkins Freeman's "Pembroke," Howells could legitimately have given his approval. Such regionalism as this, with its honest portrayal of existing conditions, was laying the foundation for a true national literature, which would come when it was fully recognized that the section could be understood only in its relation to the larger unit. Retrospective regionalism, on the other hand, was a retreat from contemporary confusion; as a movement it ended in mere quaintness.

Howells' failure to distinguish between the two types of sectionalism did not prevent him from carrying out his program, and as the local-color school declined, the vigor of the tradition he had founded became more and more apparent. He began, as did the better regionalists, with the portrayal of the life about him, but, because of his urban experience, he came much more quickly than they to the realization that he was depicting a nation in the throes of revolution. He saw that the country was changing from a federation of relatively isolated sections to a centralized nation, was losing its racial homogeneity, was becoming a stratified plutocracy. Because he felt, however confusedly, that there was no other way of understanding men and women, he tried to reveal these changes and the forces behind them as they affected the lives of his characters.

If he failed, it was not because his aims were wrong, but because the task was too much for his powers. Howells suffered from two sorts of disabilities. On the one hand, he fully shared the prudery of his age, temperamentally preferred to deal with the more cheerful aspects of life, and seldom mingled with either the ruling class or its direct victims. For these reasons he could render only in part the kinds of experiences that were most representative of the struggle he sought to describe. On the other hand, he had no fundamental clue to the meaning of that struggle; he had never undertaken the studies that would have equipped him to understand the changes he perceived. At times he caught a glimpse of the real issues, but there was no steady light to illuminate his pages. As a result, his most ambitious books, such as "A Hazard of New Fortunes," are the least unified and, in their totality, the least effective.

The story of American literature in the last forty years is primarily the account of the struggle to overcome these weaknesses. As was natural and perhaps necessary, the first victories were those that led to the broadening of the scope of the novel. In the nineties Victorianism and the genteel tradition were breaking down, and new schools of fiction arose. But the most enduring work of the decade was done by three writers who remained loyal to Howells, and were praised by him, though they sought to transcend his limitations.

Hamlin Garland, his awareness of the sufferings of his family and friends sharpened by his experiences in the East, gave, in his early short stories, a bitterly honest account of hardships on the middle border. Knowing well the kind of life he described, and refusing to compromise with sentimental optimism in his account of it, he simply swept away, in "Main-Traveled Roads," the old habits of timidity and misrepresentation. In "Maggie" Stephen Crane performed the same task, and took a short step towards the breaking down of hypocrisy and prejudice. Frank Norris, after first yielding to the romantic qualities in his nature, stiffened the realistic method with a strong mixture of Zolaesque naturalism.

For one reason or another none of these writers accomplished so much as he had promised, but they had brought into fiction great segments of experience that, despite their obvious importance, Howells had ignored. They were, however, no more successful than he in discovering a point of view that would help them to understand the American chaos. Crane, journalist to the end, was scarcely aware of the problem. Garland, relying at first on bitterness to give point to his fiction, lost himself, once that bitterness had been dispelled by his personal success, in a vaguely humanitarian patriotism. Norris, who clearly saw what the problem was, confessed his defeat when he wrote that extraordinary passage at the end of

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"The Octopus" that hymns the inevitable triumph, through the mechanical operation of natural forces, of right over wrong.

During the muckraking decade the bulk of fiction was concerned with the contemporary scene, and at last the real rulers of America began to appear in novels. If the controlling phenomenon in American life was the rise of industrialism, then the fiction of Herrick, Phillips, Sinclair and Churchill was establishing itself at the very center. Whatever else had happened, Howells' conception of the province of the novel had triumphed over every other tradition. And yet the first decade of the century was almost barren of real literary achievement. The blame could no longer be placed on lack of experience, for most of the muckrakers had had direct contact with both political and industrial struggles. For the most part they did not hesitate to portray ugliness and cruelty. Even prudishness, though strong, was losing ground in its attempt to restrain literary expression. But their failure is obvious and the reason for their failure is clear: the muckraking decade was the muddled decade. Whether the novelists of that decade followed Roosevelt as Churchill did, or attempted like Upton Sinclair the unimaginative application of socialist dogmas, or shrank with Herrick from the consequences of industrialism, or vacillated as Phillips did between sensational journalism and the preaching of panaceas, they betrayed their confusion on every page, and the centrality of their themes only called attention to their bewilderment. They could not master the chaos of American life, and that explains the chaos of their books.

If, then, the superficial obstacles to the realistic novel had been eliminated, if the novelist was able to write with both authority and frankness about the major movements in American life, and if the result was nevertheless thoroughly disappointing, it is no wonder that the validity of Howells' aim began to be questioned. Certain of the more recent novelists have more or less completely broken with the tradition he established. Edith Wharton, for example, has continued the Jamesian tradition, an awful indication of what James might have become if he had stayed in America. Hergesheimer and Cabell have, in their different ways, given us romantic fiction, more sophisticated and slightly more palatable than that of the nineties because based on avowed rather than unconscious disillusionment and defeat. Willa Cather, unable to make the transition from the West of her childhood to the West as it exists today, has achieved a kind of synthetic beauty by writing about the remote past. One by one these writers have demonstrated that, difficult as it may be to write about the central movements in American life, it is nothing short of disastrous, if one has any concern for artistic integrity, not to write about them.

Beside these writers we may place three of their contemporaries—Dreiser, Lewis, Anderson. Here, despite all changes, the old patterns repeat themselves. In the attempt to give the exact accents of common speech and to reproduce the precise mannerisms of familiar conduct, pages of Lewis' novels echo pages of Howells', though they differ often enough in the judgments they pronounce on what they both portray. Dreiser works out on a larger scale the objectivity of Crane's "Maggie" and Norris' "McTeague." Both Lewis and Anderson share with Howe and Garland the desire to show how the real life of agricultural sections differs from the pretty pictures of sentimental local colorists. And of course the fundamental intention of these writers, setting them off from their contemporaries, links them with the muckrakers, with the rebels of the nineties, and ultimately with Howells. What more than anything else they have wanted to do is to write about American life as representative Americans, as representatives of the two great classes of the exploiters and the exploited, are living it.

All three of these men have done work that the immediate future is not likely to forget, but the last five years have been full of indictments of their failures. Their failure is the same old failure: the failure to achieve order, form, significance. But too often the critics do not recognize that the problem is not exclusively literary. After all, one cannot achieve form by fiat; it is not something that is imposed upon materials from the outside; rather, it is the literary expression of perceived relationships. What is commonly called and what in this essay we have termed the American chaos is not really chaos; there is order, but it is not perceived. Unless order is seen, all talk of imposing form is folly. Dreiser, Lewis and Anderson, perceiving no fundamental relationships, seeing no unity in the phenomena they portrayed, would have been dishonest if they had attempted to impose an artificial unity. Dreiser, muddle-headed though he is, has perhaps been the clearest-sighted in practice, for he has admitted his confusion, massing his materials in a disorder of which his style is symbolic. Anderson, struggling against his own impulses to shrink from all that our industrial civilization involves, has given plentiful evidence of the way in which the conflict has checked creative activity. Both he and Dreiser have recently disavowed their old confusions and hesitations, but their earlier attitudes seem likely to continue to dominate their fiction. "Beyond Desire," certainly, though it reveals a kind of progress, marks no drastic change in Anderson's way of thinking or style of writing and, whatever he may do in the field of action, it is doubtful if he can ever free his imagination from its burden of doubt and bewilderment. As for Lewis, he shows no sign of realizing that he is in the same maze as the people he describes; and it cannot be denied that his condition explains the superficial verisimilitude of his descriptions.

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When one thinks of how much effort has been expended in this kind of writing and of how little it has directly achieved, it is not surprising that many of the authors who have come to maturity in the last decade have rejected the aims of the Dreiser-Anderson-Lewis group. The fact that they have so obviously failed to achieve formal significance has encouraged writers such as Thornton Wilder to work for perfection of form at the expense of all else. The weakness of novels about industrialism has confirmed Elizabeth Roberts and Glenway Wescott in their choice of other topics. And, as Miss Roberts has revived regionalism—with many of the earlier faults, by the way—so Faulkner has appeared in the tradition of Poe and Bierce. Surveying the twenties at their close, critics argued, and with much justification, that the Howells tradition had been momentarily, and perhaps permanently, submerged.

But there was a writer in that tradition, one whose importance is receiving growing recognition. Curiously enough, Sinclair Lewis singled him out in 1925, saying that John Dos Passos' "Manhattan Transfer" was a suggestion of what the future might develop in fiction. Dos Passos stands squarely in the major tradition, for, far more than any other recognized writer of our generation, he is dealing with representative men and women in representative situations. And not only is the tradition continued in his work; it moves towards its consummation. Equipped with a many-sided knowledge of American life, and unhampered by either reticence or superficial optimism, he is also feeling his way towards an interpretation of American life that enables him to bind together in a literary unit its diverse phenomena.

It is not to be supposed that Dos Passos has completely triumphed over his difficulties. He has found ways of portraying the complexity of American life, but he has not altogether succeeded in showing the unity that underlies that diversity. Yet he has been successful enough to indicate the point at which an artist must stand if the pattern of our life is to take shape in his imagination. Dos Passos' fundamental discovery is that American life is a battleground, and that arrayed on one side are the exploiters and on the other the exploited. He has seen that the alignment is not always clear, that many men are divided in their loyalties, that each side is rent by internecine conflicts. But the great fact is none the less real, and for the patient mind and the active imagination it is the key to the labyrinth. If there is any other working interpretation of the apparent chaos than that which presents itself in terms of the class struggle, it has not been revealed. On the other hand, the pragmatic value of that interpretation is apparent in "The 42nd Parallel" and "1919." Nor does Dos Passos stand alone. The same attitude is apparent in some of the work of John Herrmann, Erskine Caldwell and Robert Cantwell, and it is the shaping spirit of three recent novels of Southern labor—Fielding Burke's "Call Home the Heart," Grace Lumpkin's "To Make My Bread" and Myra Page's "Gathering Storm." Such books show that this interpretation is not an open sesame to literary excellence; they show that even a skillful writer may meet with difficulties that he cannot solve. But at the same time they indicate that, as the conception of the class struggle permeates the imaginations of artists, as they come to look naturally and effortlessly at events in its light, the liberation of American literature from confusion, superficiality and despair will have begun.

The discovery of the class struggle as the fundamental interpretation of American life presents a further problem to the artist, the problem of his own position in the conflict. Not only Dos Passos but the other novelists of the struggle, as well as Dreiser and Anderson, have solved that problem by placing themselves on the side of the proletariat, working for and with them and seeking to see life as they see it. Is not this the only logical position for the artist who understands the implications of the class conflict? After all, the American artist for over a century has constantly criticized the ideals of the bourgeoisie, and this criticism has steadily increased in bitterness. Long experience shows that for the artist there is no health in the bourgeois way of life. If, then, the issue is clearly presented, if it is fully realized that in this war, as in any war, there is no such thing as neutrality, can artists hesitate to ally themselves with the proletariat? Of course they can and will, many of them, impelled by forces stronger than reason or the desire for understanding; but is not the price they will pay sufficiently indicated in the history of our literature?

After all, for the realistic novelist the idea of an alliance with the proletariat is not new. Intellectually, Howells was not far from that solution of his difficulties, as his "Traveler from Altruria" shows, though it was impossible for him imaginatively to accept the consequences of his theories. Garland, for a few years, thought and wrote as one of an oppressed class. The muckrakers, confused as they were, saw the failings of the capitalists, and some of them saw the failings of capitalism. The sympathies of Anderson and Dreiser have always been, and now of course more strongly than ever, on the side of the exploited. Dos Passos, then, and his fellow pioneers, by finding in the proletarian point of view a solution for their problems, have not gone outside the tradition. Rather, they have fulfilled it the more richly, not merely carrying out its aims, but also more completely expressing its spirit. Thus they make doubly clear what the basis of the tradition is and give double assurance that in it lies the hope of our literature.

GRANVILLE HICKS.

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Washington Notes

Running Full Steam—The President's Program—Happy Daze—Congressional Breakers—The World Court and Mr. Hearst

PRESIDENT Roosevelt's policies and program continue to unfold with a rapidity which bewilders the Democratic members of House and Senate, baffles the critical opposition and leaves even the eager, alert and enthusiastic "corps of correspondents" breathless in its effort to keep pace. Bills follow executive orders, conferences follow bills, more executive orders follow conferences. Oil, coal, farm relief, unemployment, mortgage relief, banks, railroads, economy, large public-works appropriations, reorganization, consolidations and World Court, reduction of federal employees in one direction and the creation of new jobs in another—these, as I write, are among the subjects upon which action has been taken by the administration, or upon which it is being planned to take action before this session ends.

It is expected by the inside administration circle that Congress will adjourn before June 1, with everything done that the White House wants done. This seems an altogether incredible expectation, but such is the state of affairs that if it turns out to be largely justified, I shall not be stunned. The fact is that the unprecedented speed with which Mr. Roosevelt has compelled Congress to deal one after the other with complicated and complex propositions, has left the leaders in a giddy whirl. Unable to assimilate the new and expansive proposals before them, and with no clear sense of direction of their own, there is really little they can do except to follow the White House leadership.

So far as that leadership is concerned, it must be admitted that it has a note of authority about it, and this, so it appears to me, is the answer. It may easily be that the multitudinous and complex plans which have been issuing in a steady stream from the White House are not all sound or practical. It may even be that some of them are aimed in the wrong direction and will involve us in trouble. It may be, also, that Mr. Roosevelt himself does not know how they will work out. He has said as much about the farm-relief bill and is a bit unsure about the financing scheme by which the budget is to be balanced and great public works begun at the same time.

Nevertheless, there is about his promulgations, proclamations and performances no tinge of uncertainty. He may not be clear as to where he is going—or rather where he is coming out—but he is not the least uncertain about starting. Moreover, as there is no one in the Senate or House ready to start in any other direction; as there is no one with alternative plans or proposals; and as conditions are such that inaction is a thing the public will no longer tolerate, there just isn't anything else for the congressional statesmen to do except follow the leader.

So, as things appear to a more or less detached observer, it seems pretty certain that the bulk of the Roosevelt program will go through by the end of May, somewhat modified, compromised and amended, but none the less largely along the lines laid down by the presidential advisory board which has been at work preparing for this special session since the election. Some of its members were engaged in preparatory work even before that easily predictable event. This is not to say that there is not in this session ample opportunity for bumps and for bungling. But with his present prestige, his still undistributed patronage and lack of anything like organized opposition, the odds all favor the successful enactment of his program, unless he loses his present poise and himself begins to wobble.

It is fair to say that there are as yet no indications of any such thing. On the contrary, the presidential atmosphere is the most optimistic imaginable and the White House offices exude gayety and good humor. The contrast with the Hoover gloom is, of course, most marked, but the main impression one gets is that everyone in an official position—including the President, his Secretaries, the members of his Cabinet and even the new minor officials—is greatly enjoying his job and having a perfectly grand time. Nobody seems borne down with burdens; no one appears dismayed at the gravity of the problems or the seriousness of conditions. It is true that this general light-heartedness rather annoys a few who see nothing much in the country as yet about which to cheer, and who feel that there is much deep water ahead. But in the main the "cheer up, boys, we're on our way" attitude of the administration has had a beneficial effect not only on the Washington spirit, but on that of the people in every section.

Of course, there are congressional tangles ahead, and we have as yet had no real test of Roosevelt's quality in a show-down fight with the Senate. None such is apt to come on domestic issues at this session for the reasons given above, but he does seem to have opened the road for a real one in the announced determination, through Senator Robinson, the Democratic leader, to force a vote on the World Court. As a matter of fact, in this Mr. Roosevelt is showing more courage than in almost anything else he has done. Here is a proposal that has been batted around in our politics for nearly fifteen years. Both parties have pledged themselves to it in four party conventions. Harding, Coolidge and Hoover each urged its ratification, but without fervor. A relatively small Senate minority has succeeded in choking it off in session after session, though there have been in nearly every Senate since 1920 votes enough to make the necessary two-thirds majority. Now comes Mr. Roosevelt, the fifth President to be publicly pledged to our joining the Court. Unlike his three predecessors, who procrastinated and postponed, this President in the first month of his term directs his Senate party leader's attention to the fact that here is a party pledge that he wants redeemed.

Of course, the mere announcement of an interest in the Court proposal threw the Hearst newspapers into a fever of excitement, and the alleged disastrous consequences of any attempt at this time to act upon the protocol were depicted in screaming editorials. Hearst men in Washington rushed around, declaring that this meant the "break" between Hearst and the President; that anything else Mr. Hearst was prepared to stand but not this; that Mr. Hearst felt he had been assured of Roosevelt's "soundness" as to "foreign entanglements" before his nomination; that this is the one thing Mr. Hearst considers vital; that he cannot support an administration that is not "sound" on the League

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and the "League Court." Echoes of the Hearst feeling came from various anti-Court Senators—Johnson of California, Lewis of Illinois, Borah of Idaho, and the air for a couple of days was full of threats about the danger to the whole Roosevelt program if the Court issue were forced. None of this, I am informed, perturbed the serene Mr. Roosevelt in the least, and the expectation of those who conferred with him on the subject is that he will press the issue regardless of Mr. Hearst.

One big idea he has in his mind is to redeem every pledge in his party platform as quickly as possible. He knows this platform, which is the shortest on record, by heart, and wants to leave no pledge unredeemed when the special session ends. It is also clearly in Roosevelt's mind that the time for him to get what he wants is now—that the chances of anything put over until December are diminished. This accounts, I think, for the piling in of the whole program now. The administration argument about the Court is that the fight has to come soon or late, and it is better to have it now while the President's power is at the top. As for the Hearst support, it has, up to date, been of such a glowing, glamorous, extravagant type that it is difficult to see how it could suddenly be switched without obvious stultification—that is it would be difficult to imagine anyone but Mr. Hearst making the switch.

Washington. T. R. B.

That's Where Your Money Goes

Moon-calf Market—Bad Times in Old Heidelberg —Protecting Foreign Bondholders—Banking in Flint, Michigan

IT IS necessary to chronicle the melancholy end of a stock-market boom. Those who fondly supposed that the American investor has learned his sad lesson will do well to ponder the collapse of what might be called the "bank-crash bull market." The market and its current operators had things primed for a movement as the inauguration approached. It is difficult to believe, yet it is a fact, that from February 28 to March 3—as banks were closing all over the country, as state after state proclaimed moratoria, as great premonitory cracks ran over the walls of the quaking system—the stock market rose each day, from an average of 47.06 to 51.63.

When the bank holidays were over, in spite of the fact that thousands of banks remained closed, imprisoning many billions of working capital, the market soared. It opened on March 15 at 53.32 and rose five points at once. Next day it reached its height, 59.93. Trading was brisk. The old customers were back in the brokers' offices, their brains checked at the door as usual. Three million shares changed hands that first day.

But alas! Like so many of those calf bull markets of Herbert Hoover, which used to thrill the great man's soul, this premature foundling died in just thirteen days. By March 27 the market had sunk back to 52.7, or within half a point of the level at which it closed on that fateful March 3 as the household goods of the Magician were being moved from the White House.

Was this puny bull convulsion whipped up? Well, on that opening day half of all the sales were in some thirty-two issues. Case (J. I.) Company has outstanding only 197,000 shares of common stock. The market opened Wednesday. By Saturday sales of Case shares practically equaled the entire issue. In the thirteen days of the "boom," transactions in Case stock totaled 349,500, or almost twice the whole number of shares outstanding.

Of course, the reigning racket now, in this land of rackets, is the protective committee. The investor ought to be familiar with it by now. When a corporation or government defaults on a bond, immediately the clever gentlemen who sold the sick securities to investors leap in as the protectors and saviors of their victims. Of course, salvation is supplied on the usual profit basis. It also enables the savior to keep under cover some of the ultra-devious sleight-of-hand by which the securities were marketed.

Behold the following. In 1925 the firm of F. J. Lisman and Company marketed $1.5 million of bonds for the city of Heidelberg (Germany) at 7½ percent, due in 1950. Last January rumors got around that Heidelberg would default and that the city was then secretly negotiating to get debt concessions. Immediately—on January 8—Mr. F. J. Lisman, former head of F. J. Lisman and Company, issued an indignant statement denying that Heidelberg would default. He pointed out that the American dollar loan absorbed less than 3 percent of the city's revenues. This was very reassuring and the bonds promptly went from 57 to 60.

Recently the United States Senate had a look at the files of a leading bank. They found a letter addressed from this same Mr. Lisman to the bank. It was dated January 13, just five days after the above statement. The letter stated that the city of Heidelberg had failed for two months to make the monthly instalment payments on its dollar bonds to its New York agents and that the city was then practically in default. This bank had collected coupons for various holders of this issue. Mr. Lisman was anxious to get a list of those bondholders. As the banker who had sold the bonds and who had just issued that reassuring statement, he wanted quietly to get hold of bondholders. Mr. Lisman, of course, naturally supposed himself to be the proper person to form the bondholders' protective committee. One might well suppose after that statement of January 8 that the function of protection belonged in other hands.

What is the gravy which makes these protective committees so alluring? I have some facts about one of the well known and more reputable real-estate-bond protective committees. Here they are:

An apartment in Atlanta sagged under a bond issue of $459,000. The owner defaulted. There was a foreclosure. Of course, all the costs of foreclosure had to be paid. But besides that the protective committee also had to be paid. The committee bid in the building and then sold it for $240,698, or only a little more than half the mortgage. On top of the foreclosure charges the committee added another charge of $40,810. This was practically 17 percent. If you will remember that this committee handled about seventy such cases in just one big realty-bond-com-

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pany failure you will see what a very juicy trade this is.

The immaturity of the American investor in the field of foreign finance has resulted in exposing him to the mercy of those who made their profit out of exploiting him. Hence, in innumerable cases, the bankers who sold him the bonds have formed the protective committees. How many such committees there are I do not know. But I do know there are some 131 foreign dollar-bond issues in default involving outstanding indebtedness to American investors of $1,486,047,000. This situation, which is growing steadily worse, has created a new field of usefulness for some sort of co-operative action by foreign security holders. As a matter of fact at this moment various socially minded groups are forming committees to deal with various aspects of the investors' problems. At least one of them has reached something like maturity. That is the American Council of Foreign Bondholders, patterned after the English Corporation of Foreign Bondholders. This is a non-profit-making membership association which will be devoted to keeping security holders advised of their true interests and to collaborating in any approved plans to protect them when protection is necessary. The men who form the directorate of this group are a guarantee of the high purpose of the organization. It includes such men as John M. Chapman of Columbia University, Thomas H. Healy of Georgetown University, Chester L. Jones of the University of Wisconsin, Denys P. Myers, director of research of the World Peace Foundation, J. R. McIntosh, investment counsel, Ernest M. Patterson of the University of Pennsylvania, Jacob Viner of the University of Chicago, Dr. Max Winkler, Bernhard Ostrolenk of the College of the City of New York and Dr. B. C. J. Loder, former president of the Permanent International Court of Justice at the Hague.

Secrecy is indeed the food upon which rascality, stupidity and folly feed. The case of the Harriman Bank in New York and the suppression of its plight by the government for six months is paralleled in Michigan. There the Union Industrial Trust and Savings Bank of Flint has been in trouble for some time. Now suddenly Detroit hears that a suit is brought by a woman stockholder against the chairman of the board of the bank and the defunct Guardian-Detroit-Union group which owns it, alleging that through their negligence she has suffered a loss of $197,000. A part of that negligence is that the chairman has attended only three out of 160 meetings of the board. In any case this suit, one hears with amazement, was filed almost a year ago—in June, 1932. The suit then alleged the bank to be "in a precarious if not insolvent condition." The filing of the suit has remained up to now a profound secret. The attorney in the case was threatened by the bank officials with prosecution for making derogatory allegations about a bank if he did not amend his petition. He refused to amend it, but no prosecution followed. Now the bank is one of those which failed to open when the bank holiday ended. Also during this period of secret insolvency the bank got over $2 million from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. Is there to be no end to the reckless folly which almost daily is coming to light about these "guardians of the public's money"?

JOHN T. FLYNN.

Theatre Note

ONE OF the unfortunate conditions of our theatre and its enclosing circumstances is the way in which a play appears, is judged more or less, and so stands or falls. Now and again there are newsy mentions of it in the newspapers or Sunday articles or write-ups, and in the weekly or monthly journals a review that must perforce come later than the next-morning reviews. There are many conversations one way and another about a play, running all the way from an intelligent consideration of its content or production or performance on down to the kind of criticism that turns to the star's personality. There is a sort of antennae contact by which one ant after another is sent to some hit or other; there is a scattered buzzing among the bees that sends the swarm in some direction. But of any discussion or influence or school of thought such as may have happened in salon days and such as might approve, emendate or forward a play, or champion its quality or secure its taste, there is none. Nor is there any unified or returning journalistic reaction or conversational comment that, in a more general and democratic manner, might accomplish the same effect. We need not dwell here on the point. What it comes to in sum is that in New York there is, for all the patter and bright interest in plays and play news, no real accumulation of attitude and judgment on a play; which amounts to saying that there is in reality no combination of the play and our reaction to it that might help create a genuine theatre.

A genuine theatre has a part, with regard to its subject and content, its esthetics and its performance, in a society. This society in its turn affects the theatre directly and creatively, endorses and delights in its own expression through the theatre or repels what it cannot follow there. Ultimately this reaction from society and this response from the theatre might be conceived as bringing further toward significance, or even perfection, a theatre event that at the start had only a certain amount of either. It is through this partial significance, plus the implication or promise of more, that a theatre event may need and may deserve our creative response and criticism. But as things stand, this does not happen; in our theatre what falls on its feet falls on its feet, good or bad, and what does not goes into the discard. Much of all our American life, of course, is like that.

It is also true, as a sound principle, that what counts for the health and movement of the theatre is not the safe show, built on a tried and trusty pattern, the same old thing that people know already but that is newly fitted out with skill or shrewdness or timeliness. This at its best is only a sort of liveliness going on in a husk. What counts is the work that has a pressing life in it, not so much a matter of something new but rather of something alive.

The application of this last point is that "Run, Little Chillun!" is the most important piece of theatre in town. To say that it is the best play would be wrong of course. There are a number of expert plays in town, produced with adequacy and skill, not to say now and again with sure-fire professional handling. There are also plays of enough craftsmanship to catch on, often little stage affairs, pleasant and diverting (save perhaps to those who go rarely

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to the theatre and are apt to expect something of it when they go) that prosper only on the same principle as that of the city man and the eggs in the story—he did not like country eggs because they had no kick to them. All this may be; but to say that there is any American or modern British play in town of importance would be impossible. There is nothing that dares the familiar technical limits of the theatre form, nothing that extends the imagination, or enriches the language medium, or sends the spectator home with the sense of power, creation, music or simple intensity and rich change within him. Of "Run, Little Chillun!" one could say that it could scarcely fail to send us away with at least something of this fuller experience. I have been four times to the Lyric, and would not only say this but should add that, though various Negro plays have had good singing sometimes, good dancing and certain of the simpler humors or grim themes, there has not been one that could compare in the full diapason of Negro quality, in the subtlety, and in the directing, with what we find in the last act of "Run, Little Chillun!"

With regard to my first point, one of the illuminating facts is that, though out-of-town trials may go on, altering, cutting or rewriting with an eye on town approval, it is nevertheless true that, outside a revue or musical show now and then, there is precious little revising, restudying and creative attention given to a play or production once it has opened on Broadway and got the press notices and embarked on its chance with the public. In the case of "Run, Little Chillun!" I have observed every time some others in the audience that I have seen there before, and on inquiring of the management have been told that the "repeaters," coming more than once, bringing others to share their sense of the occasion, have been strikingly numerous. This is a non-barbarous sign; since nothing is less civilized than running everywhere once, curious, browsing, battening, passing on to the next hunting ground. I have already written of this production, but my conscience hurts me at the thought of letting it go on by in the stream of Broadway and writing meanwhile little notices of later more or less rubbish.

On the positive side of my review of "Run, Little Chillun!" I spoke of those fine qualities in range and in what is stirring, elusive and beautiful. I should like to say this again to these players, musicians, singers and so on. I must include the excellence of Mr. Harry Bolden as the Reverend Jones of Hope Baptist Church, the remarkable and inexhaustible variety of poignant humor, invention and spirits in the crowd of players in the Hope Church congregation, lists of names that cannot be made distinct among so many roles, though the things done were among the best about the play. On the negative side there is no need to repeat the criticism, especially in places where the case is hopeless, as it is with Mr. Jack Carr's Brother Moses, of the Pilgrims, with his good voice and impossible naïvely correct idea of correct English, and that air of reciting a Sunday piece. The same, I suppose, is true of some of Mr. Hall Johnson's writing, though there must be some sort of audience-response that would lead him to revise the speeches in favor of either a real naturalness or a convincing elevation, instead of the frequent pomposity or school-book or naïveté or whatever it is that makes the speeches so hard for any actor to say. The Pilgrims in the wood, too, might be induced toward something less Reinhardt and muddled. It ought to be obvious that for the part of the wife, the suffering role in the play, Miss Edna Thomas is very undramatically costumed, not because the costume lacks quaintness or some supposed Negro character, but because it only adds to the effect of rigidity and dryness in her performance. On the other hand a sensible critic would be afraid to say anything at all to Miss Olive Ball as the Reverend Sister Luella Strong. The prayer she makes at Hope Church is, along with the writing itself, an extraordinary mingling of beautiful imagery, the grotesque, the powerful and the humble all together. You watch it, astonished at its bizarre intensity and its tender boldness and sincerity in effect, outlined and unified, suddenly ended and seen as complete, like some piece of sculpture. You cannot admire enough, also, the producer and the director who would let it stand like that, instead of trimming it to more stage safety and commonplace. This prayer delineated the whole final act by seeming to consummate the main high quality of the act: inexhaustible spontaneity solidified by an outside creative hand toward a rich whole. I have never seen an instance where to so great an extent the means appeared to be humble and the end exalted.

Such a way of taking such an occasion in the theatre implies a plane of criticism that, obviously, would distort the record of diverse productions since then. We may except moments in "One Sunday Afternoon," directed by Mr. Leo Bulgakov, a genre comedy that is often pleasantly charming, though it needs filling out in some of the scenes and speeding up in places for more variety. And Miss Ruth Gordon's playing of several scenes in "Three-Cornered Moon" displays her wit and her very original management of nuance.

STARK YOUNG.

Ex-Reading Room

IT MUST have been a fairly quiet little place, the reading room of the Whitney Museum in New York City, before Thomas Benton got into it and executed his grandiose satirical fresco, "The Arts of Life in America," on its walls and ceiling. It lies directly beneath the eaves of the old brick house, high over the galleries. One reaches it from the third story by means of a special little steep, narrow flight of stairs. Entering its low doorway, one finds oneself in a cubicle, peaceful despite the mounting clatter of the Eighth Street cars. The slender windows open on a prospect of roof lines and sky; and books stored in the old-fashioned, sunken, grated cupboards reënforce the chamber's other invitations to the general supervision of things.

At present, however, spiraling painted forms strike the eye of the frightened visitor immediately he enters the apartment. The super-life-sized Michelangelesque figures violently projected on the walls imperiously attract his attention to themselves; squirming forward and up and making as if to spring out and land full force upon him. We say "the walls." But the truth is that, like the atmosphere of the room, they too have been shattered. The fact known to fresco-painters such as Puvis de Chavannes, that a wall is not merely a place on which to paint pictures, but

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an architectural form which the artist must help make significant, seems to have carried no weight with Benton. Where the partitions of the reading room used to stand, a sort of vacuum appears now to lie, filled with shapes and lines and colors that are evidently giving an exhibition of shadow-boxing: lunging, ducking, delivering uppercuts and body-blows; and never for an instant letting us forget the science and the muscularity involved in them.

The lack of feeling for the rooms and the walls given him to decorate displayed by Benton is unfortunately largely characteristic of his art itself. Were it less thoroughly so; were his mural in the Whitney reading room the product of fine, true feeling, no matter how irrelevant to the spirit of the place itself, one would scarcely be impelled to dwell on his neglect of all considerations of fitness and taste. The acquisition of a work of plastic art would amply have compensated for the loss of a peaceful spot in which to read art books and absorb the wisdom of esthetic periodicals. The damage might even have seemed minimal. But the fresco Benton has created is but another tiresome expression of the childish lack of respect for the identity of things and the quality of the life contained in them exemplified in the treatment of the room and walls. Benton has exhibited the ugliness of his human subjects in an ugly fashion. To begin with: his thesis is that the arts of life in America are thoroughly crude, gross and ungracious. And to illustrate it, he has presented us with dancing, carousing, murdering types drawn from the primitive fringe of American life, from among Indians, city racketeers and burlesque-show entertainers, hill-billies and cornfield Negroes; and exhibited them now humorously, now nastily, violently, hysterically expressing the national insensibility. This in itself is an unfriendly exaggeration. Many of the arts of life in America, particularly the folk-arts, are charming and gracious; nor are the more primitive types of people and their expressions the centrally, dominantly American. The underexpressive, timorous, conventional rotarian type is far more characteristic of us. In any case, a real feeling for things would have made Benton contrast the two classes.

Nor has he been just to the representative types he has chosen. If he has seen some of them accurately, he has consistently depicted them with an accuracy barbed with hate or disgust or fear. He has cheerfully turned his ignorant and miserable originals into objects of contempt, aversion and dread, first by concentrating on their deathliness and impotence, nastiness and brutality, practically to the exclusion of all other traits; and second, by making them super-life-sized; thus attributing to them a power and importance which they actually have not got. Where he has felt sympathetically, as in the Negro group on the west wall, his benevolence has been unaccompanied by an interest sufficiently great to make the pictures realistic. It is characteristic that the one white man he has portrayed with some sympathy is the defeated poker-player who has just failed to draw the hand he was gambling for.

Again, the absence of sensitiveness to life speaks from the composition itself. It is conveyed by the composition's kind of "pseudo" plasticity. For form is the product and the sign of a feeling, through things, of whatever lies behind them; and where there is no form, we are forced to recognize the absence of its source. True, Benton has manfully striven to build up a grandiose composition by means of a vigorous counterplay of antithetical shapes and lines and colors. But the effect is far below the aim, and has to be assisted by the spectator's good will. The contrasts are not felt: they are merely planned. The prevalent gyrating, squirming motions, familiarized by former Benton paintings, certainly smell of the formula. Nor is Benton's color functional. It does almost nothing. As for contrasting textures, he does not seem to be aware of their existence.

Thus, we have lost rather more than gained. The new mural remains largely on the plane of caricatural illustration. That it represents an advance over Benton's fresco in The New School is indisputable. It is relatively simpler, better put together and more vigorous. In any case, it is respectable as the fruit of indefatigable labor, tremendous science of a sort and virility and "guts." And it is a great pity that the vast energy manifest in it should be applied to the expression of unrealities, and half-wasted, as it were, in hot air. PAUL ROSENFELD.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mortgage-Interest Rates

SIR: One need not be an expert in constitutional law to raise doubts as to the accuracy of Rose Stein's observations regarding a possible change in mortgage-interest rates, by law. It is true that states are forbidden to pass laws impairing the obligation of contract, but that is the very thing that the "rent laws" accomplished in New York State, and their constitutionality was tested and upheld in the highest court in the land. You will recall that these laws permitted a tenant to pay, and obliged a landlord to accept, a "reasonable" rental irrespective of the lease rate, provided the apartment came within the class as to which the legislature declared an "emergency" existed.

Certainly the emergency confronting home owners, so ably described by Miss Stein, is as great as that which existed in New York City during the reign of the rent laws, and I can see nothing confiscatory or unconstitutional if the legislatures of the several states passed laws declaring that 4 percent, in these times, is a "reasonable" return on home mortgages.

The charge that a 4-percent return is confiscatory can very readily be met by the fact that it is only the "nominal rate"; as Miss Stein points out, the "real" rate is at least 50 percent higher, in terms of purchasing power of the dollar today, as compared with three or four years ago.

Of course, that will not dispose of the problem of refinancing maturing mortgages where the mortgagees refuse to renew. I believe, however, that a general reduction of interest rates to 4 percent will give such a strong tonic effect to the whole real-estate market that few mortgagees will refuse renewal. And if they should, the Home Loan Bank should be empowered to take care of them. It is also possible, of course, although I have given no thought to the question, that a general moratorium on foreclosures, where 4-percent interest and taxes have been paid, would be legal and constitutional in this emergency.

New York City. MEYER KURZ.

Stamped Scrip and the Depression

SIR: I can well understand Mr. Justin H. Moore's arguments against stamped scrip if my article in The New Republic of December 21 is his only reference.

There has since been tremendous interest in the "Dated Stamped Scrip" plan; I have correspondence with many hundred persons all over the country on this subject. Stamped scrip is no panacea, but I believe it is the most efficient anti-depression remedy yet found. It will work because it will begin recovery at the bottom, not with the retailer, as Mr. Moore thought, but with the consumer who has no purchasing power at present. When people

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will again be able to buy, the merchants will sell and the manufacturers reëmploy idle men. Even if one ordinary dollar were driven out of circulation for each stamped-scrip dollar issued, it would still be of advantage, because the dated stamped scrip circulates many times as fast as the old dollar, and thus effects many times more transactions.

The stamp tax will be paid out of the additional profits the recipients of the scrip have made. New turnover and profits are made where there is no business today. I think that on this additional business the small tax, amounting to 2 percent divided by the number of weekly transactions, is justified.

That stamped scrip can be made to work successfully has been demonstrated by the examples of Schwanenkirchen, in Germany, and Woergl, Austria. A great number of American cities, large and small, today contemplate the issue of dated stamped scrip or have already issued it. In a number of states special laws are expected authorizing cities and counties to issue such scrip.

I consider the question of stamped scrip of such vital importance that I have written a special small book on the subject, which will appear shortly. I hope it will help eliminate the many misunderstandings which still exist about stamped scrip.

New Haven, Conn. IRVING FISHER.

How Many Unemployed?

SIR: In an editorial in The New Republic of March 1, you quote Business Week's recent estimate of the numbers unemployed in the United States. The Labor Research Association has been at work for some time on such an estimate, and we are glad to send you the result of our findings.

According to our estimate, which has been carefully checked, nearly 17 million men, women and young workers were unemployed in the United States in November, 1932. This number represents about one-third of all "gainfully occupied" persons. Of all wage earners about 42 percent are jobless.

Although The Business Week estimated 15,250,000 for November and the American Federation of Labor counted only 11,590,000, a more complete tabulation reveals 16,774,000. Approximately 15,700,000 of these are wage workers—including rank and file office workers—and some 1,080,000 are made up of teachers, technicians, minor executives, petty traders, farmers' families pushed out by the crisis into the mass of jobless workers.

It is apparent that the Business Week statisticians omitted entirely two important groups: (1) the jobless migratory or transient workers and others not counted at all in the 1930 census; and (2) the increase of population during the past two years, which has added at least a million young workers to the total number seeking jobs. The Unemployment Census of April, 1930, is an important part of any careful estimate—supplemented by employment-index figures published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Department of Agriculture, and employment figures published by the Bureau of Mines, Interstate Commerce Commission, and in the Census of Manufactures. Uncritical acceptance of the Unemployment Census therefore must lead to an underestimation of the number of unemployed.

It must be remembered that the unemployment figures gathered as a part of the federal census of April, 1930, were recognized at the time as incomplete. Uncounted tens of thousands of jobless migratory or homeless workers were not included. Also, uncounted persons interviewed by the enumerators were not asked for information on employment. Before the crash of October, 1929, several widely accepted estimates had shown from 3,500,000 to 4,500,000 persons out of work during years of relative prosperity. But the Unemployment Census showed only 3,700,000 out of work six months after the crash. The Labor Research Association believes it is reasonable to add at least 800,000 jobless, to bring the basic total number already unemployed in April, 1930, up to 4,500,000. This additional 800,000 is included in the figure we give as "industry not specified."

We shall be glad to furnish those who are interested the detailed calculations underlying our estimates for each or all of the particular groups. Address the Labor Research Association, 80 East Eleventh Street, New York City.

ANNA ROCHESTER.

New York City.

SIR: We take no exception to the principal point made by the Labor Research Association in its discussion of The Business Week's estimate of unemployment as of November, 1932. Admittedly, we made no estimate of the number of young people who have come of working age since 1930. Undoubtedly they outnumber employable persons who have died since 1930. But we think it is a debatable point whether people who never have worked should be classified as "unemployed"; at least it is a nice question when they shall pass over the line into that classification. Shall we start at fourteen, fifteen, sixteen—or where? What about those who have decided to go to school a year or two or three longer? Are they unemployed? . . . Any estimate of this whole group must be pretty much arbitrary guesswork. The Association's guess looks very sensible.

But we had a better reason for not including this group. We were intent upon producing figures strictly comparable with the National Industrial Conference Board's last published estimate, as of July, 1931, so widely accepted as authoritative. We expected the Board would publish another estimate as of July, 1932. When it did not, we decided to use the Conference Board's base data and methods, project its series up to date and discover rate of change. Since the Board did not try to guess the number of employable young people who never yet had gone to work, we could not do so without distorting the comparison. . . .

As to the additional point that the Association makes—concerning migratory or transient workers—it is based upon the assertion that the 1930 census was inadequate in that respect. Frankly, we do not know whether it was or was not.

MARC A. ROSE,
Editor, The Business Week.

New York City.

Extracts from Letters

PIONEER Youth of America, Inc., 69 Bank Street, New York City, announces its third summer of camps and play schools in "critical industrial towns in the South." It asks for "progressively inclined teachers to act as leaders, and students and untrained workers as assistants. Living expenses are paid only for leaders, but those who have worked in the past have found the experience tremendously valuable." . . . James D. Stevens, Tallahassee, Florida, says "The article by George Soule, on 'The Debt Burden' in The New Republic, March 22, is excellent. . . . If space requirements had permitted, Mr. Soule might well have pointed out some of the results of the improvement of technological processes upon the factor of long-term borrowing." . . . Erich F. Stuewe, Sausalito, California, writes to object to Ferner Nuhn's article on "Wallace of Iowa" in the issue of March 15. He believes that "cooperation under the present system has failed and always will fail as long as the coöperative set-up is finally topped by the bankers." . . . William L. Patterson, National Secretary, The International Labor Defense, 80 East Eleventh Street, New York City, asks contributions toward the expense of the second trial of the Scottsboro boys. . . . Lincoln Steffens sends us from Carmel, California, announcement of a drive to repeal the California Criminal Syndicalism Law. He points out that "more than 200 people have been condemned as felons to long terms in California penitentiaries under this law. Six hundred and fifty people have been arrested under it, practically all of them working men. The only facts actually proven in any of these cases were membership in a radical union or party, participation in a strike, selling literature which advocated a social change. No overt acts were proven. Of 114 convictions, 55 were dismissed on appeal. Thus the law has been used to suppress freedom of discussion, workingmen's organizations and assembly." . . . This appeal is signed by many other distinguished Californians including Upton Sinclair, C. E. S. Wood, John D. Barry, Miriam Allen de Ford, Martin Flavin, Ella Winter, Marie de L. Welch and Orrick Johns. . . . William Stack writes from Park Ridge, Illinois, that "unfortunately, the engineer and scientist have practically nothing to say as to how invention may be used to liberate the working man from the usual drudgery. . . . The scientist and the engineer devise various machines which should be used to free mankind from toil . . . but it devolved on the capitalist owner of the machine to prostitute this laudable aim to his own selfish ends."

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Spring Book Section

The Art of Insurrection

The History of the Russian Revolution, by Leon Trotsky. Translated by Max Eastman. New York: Simon and Schuster. 3 vols. 1404 pages. Vol. I, $4; Vols. II and III, $3.50 each. The set, boxed, $10.

THE FARMER says, "If they don't stop foreclosing our mortgages, there's going to be a revolution." The steel worker says, "They've cut our wages once too often. It's getting to be time for a revolution." The Congressman says, waving a sheaf of letters from his constituents, "Unless the present situation is remedied, we must face the possibility of revolution."—"The situation is improving," the banker says, "but Communist propaganda is spreading dangerously."—"We are not reaching the masses," the Communist says. "Today the objective conditions are ripe for a revolution, but the subjective conditions are lagging behind. We must demand. . . ." Pouring another drink, the reporter says, "Well, boys, here's to the revolution tomorrow."

With the possible exception of the Communist, not one of them has the vaguest idea of what a revolution means. They picture, if they are bankers, a country given over to robbery, murder and the rape of bankers' wives. They picture, if they are farmers or mill workers, a march on Washington, with banners—Congress turned out by military force—a few bankers hanged from the balcony of the Stock Exchange, to encourage the others—then everybody goes back to work at higher pay and wheat sells for $2 a bushel—everything is jake, all the world is hunky-dory.

But a revolution is something definite, tragic, subject to inexorable laws which can be deduced from revolutions of the past and applied to those of the future. "A revolution breaks out when all the antagonisms of society have reached their highest tension." "The fundamental premise of a revolution is that the existing social structure has become incapable of solving the urgent problems of development of a nation." "The most indubitable feature of a revolution is the direct interference of the masses in historic events." "Revolutions take place according to certain laws. This does not mean that the masses in action are aware of the laws of revolution, but it does mean that the changes in mass consciousness are not accidental, but are subject to an objective necessity which is capable of theoretic explanation, and thus makes possible both prophecy and leadership." "Insurrection is an art, and like all arts it has its laws."

To all those vaguely anticipating a revolution, or trying to prevent it, or wavering between discontent and fear, I recommend Leon Trotsky's "History of the Russian Revolution." It is many things in one: a narrative of what happened during eight memorable months in Russia, a natural history of the forces that lay behind the crisis, an incomparable gallery of portraits, a study of mass pressure, a pamphlet against Stalin, the author's *apologia pro vita sua,* an enormous farce with Kerensky as chief buffoon. Not all these elements are of equal value, nor all these people equally well portrayed. The two least successful characters are Trotsky himself and Stalin—the first because he is presented with a modesty too ostentatious, the second because he is pursued with a vindictive hatred that does not carry the reader along with it, but leaves him standing, as it were, outside a window, looking curiously at the gestures of a furious stranger.

Always Trotsky displays that archidiabolical pride which is both his virtue as an individual and his most dangerous quality as a statesman. Lucifer would have written a book like this about the civil war in heaven—but Lucifer, even, would be most compelling when he forgot his self-esteem and his hatred for St. Michael. It is so with "The History of the Russian Revolution." The book is better when describing events in which neither Stalin nor Trotsky played a part, and is best of all, I think, when the author rises above his immediate subject into the sphere of universal principles—when he sets out to write a hornbook, alphabet and primer of revolutions in general.

Why do revolutions take place? It is not because people are radical or perverse, but for precisely the opposite reason, because human society is obstinately conservative. Institutions cannot be changed "as need arises, the way a mechanic changes his tools." On the contrary, a nation clings to its institutions long after they have become an intolerable hindrance to the productive forces of society. Life changes while governments remain the same. Finally, when all antagonisms have reached their highest tension, there is likely to be a social earthquake. But "the fundamental forces of the historic process are classes"; and a revolution can occur "only in case the society contains a new class capable of taking the lead in solving the problems presented by history." Thus, a revolution might be defined as *a popular uprising which results in the shifting of power from one class to another.*

How does this apply to the so-called revolutions in Latin America? Most of them are simple conspiracies by which power passes from one clique to another within the same ruling class; only the Mexican revolution of 1910-20 really deserves the name which is applied to them all. In England, the Glorious Revolution of 1688 was a compromise which ended a long period of class conflict: the real revolution was fought by Cromwell and is known as the Civil War. Our own Civil War has also been called a revolution, but in this case I think that Trotsky would disagree with Dr. Beard. The effects of it were revolutionary, but it lacked that "most indubitable feature," the direct interference of the masses in historic events.

Modern revolutions have been of three types: colonial (like our own), bourgeois (like the French revolution of 1789 and the February revolution in Russia) and proletarian (like the Paris Commune). Of the many proletarian revolutions, only one has been successful. "Notwithstanding the number of great social and political crises, a coincidence of all the conditions necessary to a victorious and stable proletarian revolution has so far occurred only once in history: in Russia in October, 1917." Just what are these conditions necessary in any country before a proletarian

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revolution can succeed? Trotsky describes them in a masterly chapter on "The Art of Insurrection":

Political Premises.—Three things take place before an economic crisis transforms itself into a revolutionary situation. First, "the ruling classes, as a result of their practically manifested incapacity to get the country out of its blind alley, lose faith in themselves; the old parties fall to pieces; a bitter struggle of groups and cliques prevails; hopes are placed in miracles or miracle workers." Second, the revolutionary class achieves a new political consciousness, "a bitter hostility to the existing order and a readiness to venture upon the most heroic efforts and sacrifices in order to bring the country out upon an upward road." But between the bankers, industrialists and big landlords on the one side, and the factory hands and tenant farmers on the other, lie broad layers of the population, shopkeepers, sales agents, small manufacturers, teachers, engineers, government employees, the professions in general, all the people whom Marx broadly described as the petty bourgeoisie. "The discontent of these intermediate layers, their disappointment with the policy of the ruling class, their impatience and indignation, their readiness to support a bold revolutionary initiative on the part of the proletariat, constitute the third political premise of a revolution."

The Soviets.—"Just as a blacksmith cannot seize the red-hot iron in his naked hand, so the proletariat cannot directly seize the power; it has to have an organization accommodated to this task." "The organization by means of which the proletariat can both overthrow the old power and replace it, is the soviets . . . or," Trotsky adds elsewhere, "other mass organizations more or less equivalent." "The soviets are organs of preparation of the masses for insurrection, organs of insurrection, and after the victory organs of government."

The Revolutionary Party.—But the soviets alone cannot solve the problem; they must have leadership. "Whereas the soviets in revolutionary conditions—and apart from revolution they are impossible—comprise the whole working class with the exception of its altogether backward, inert or demoralized strata, the revolutionary party represents the brain of the class. The problem of conquering the power can be solved only by a definite combination of party with soviets."

The role of the party in preparing a revolution—though Trotsky does not discuss this question—is always misrepresented by its enemies. It cannot of itself produce, or even attempt to produce, a revolutionary situation. It cannot incite the masses to rebellion by deliberately worsening the conditions under which they live. Wars are a favorable opportunity for revolution, but the party cannot provoke them. It must, on the contrary, fight to prevent them, since the cost of any war is borne, eventually, by the working class, which the party cannot afford to betray. The task of creating a revolutionary situation can safely be left to the capitalist system and the classes already in power.

To fight for the interests of the workers, to evoke in them a sense of unity and strength, to persuade them to accept its leadership—these alone are the tasks of the revolutionary party during the period of preparation. They are great in themselves, but there are greater tasks ahead. It is after the revolution is under way that the work of the party demands an almost superhuman ability, and during this period, too, that its greatest failures occur. "The general testimony of history—the Paris Commune, the German and Austrian revolutions of 1918, the soviet revolutions in Hungary and Bavaria, the Italian revolution of 1919, the German crisis of 1923, the Chinese revolution of 1925-27, the Spanish revolution of 1931—is that up to now the weakest link in the chain of necessary conditions has been the party."

Insurrection and Conspiracy.—The insurrection is a violent upsurging of the masses and, in a sense, it can no more be evoked at will than a flood or an earthquake. But it can be foreseen and prepared, can be organized in advance. "In this case the conspiracy is subordinated to the insurrection, serves it, makes smooth its path, hastens its victory."

Conspiracy and insurrection are often contrasted, one being defined as the deliberate undertaking of a minority, the other as the spontaneous movement of a majority. It is true that they do not always exist together. There are conspiracies which, without any help from the masses, lead to successful coups d'états—but the defeated rulers are merely replaced by others drawn from the same class. There are insurrections without conspiracies, but they are seldom victorious and never successful—even if the government is overturned, the insurrectionists have prepared nothing to take its place; the power slips from their hands and is usually taken over by intermediate factions. A genuine revolution, leading to the victory of one social regime over another, must unite insurrection with conspiracy. And, "the higher the political level of a revolutionary movement and the more serious its leadership, the greater will be the place occupied by conspiracy in popular insurrection."

The revolutionary leaders—the party—must foresee the growing insurrection and bring it forth in due season. "The interference of the midwife in labor pains—however this image may have been abused—remains the clearest illustration of this conscious intrusion into an elemental process. . . . Between the moment when an attempt to summon an insurrection must inevitably prove premature and lead to a revolutionary miscarriage, and the moment when a favorable situation has irretrievably passed by, there exists a certain period—measured in weeks, or sometimes in months—when an insurrection may be carried out with more or less chance of success." To recognize this comparatively short period and then choose the definite moment, the very day and hour, for the last blow—"this constitutes the most responsible task of the revolutionary leaders."

The Seizure of Power.—The moment chosen must be one when the revolution can rely upon a "genuine majority" of the people. But this majority need not be arithmetical. An insurrection always occurs at a time when it is impossible to hold a referendum. Moreover, people would vote on the same day, whereas, during a revolution, the different layers of the population reach the same conclusion at different moments, perhaps months apart. These discrepancies in time and mood can be resolved only in action—"the majority is not counted up, but won over." (What Trotsky does not add is that a referendum is usually held, after the event, with grenades and rifles. It is called a civil war.)

The theory that a proletarian revolution need not be supported by a majority of the people, that it can be carried through by a few well trained detachments if they follow correct tactics, is known as Blanquism. It is condemned by Socialists and Communists alike, though for different reasons. A modern form of Blanquism is the "technological coup d'état" described by Guido Malaparte, whose book, so I understand, was read with great interest by the Technocrats. Malaparte asserted that Trotsky himself was the inventor of the method, and that he mastered Petrograd with a handful of men, a thousand at the most, merely by

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seizing its nerve centers—telegraph and newspaper offices, power stations, the telephone exchange, the State Bank.

Trotsky answers him in a few contemptuous words. It is true, he says, that the capital was seized by a small number of men. "A few thousand Red Guards, two or three thousand sailors, a score of infantry companies . . . there is no action of great masses." But the October revolution was in good truth the most popular mass insurrection in history. The bulk of the population and almost the whole army had already been won over. The revolutionary detachments could go about their work in the confidence of having supporters everywhere. The scattered government patrols were convinced of their own isolation and abandoned the very idea of resistance. There were no barricades, flaming conflagrations, looting, rivers of blood. "In reality a silence reigned more terrible than all the thunders of the world."

The Permanent Revolution.—These ideas briefly summarized from Trotsky's book are not, for the most part, original with him: many of them are the orthodox theories of Marx-Leninism as advanced by the Third International. Trotsky's chief quarrel with the International concerns a later stage in the revolutionary process, the question of what to do when the power has been seized. His answer, stated baldly, is to repeat the process elsewhere. "The Russian revolution," he quotes from Lenin, "is only one link in the chain of international revolution." Socialism cannot be achieved in any one country; it requires a socialist world.

"Trotskyism," as formally condemned by the Third International, consists of three propositions: (1) that the Soviet Union cannot maintain itself indefinitely in a world of capitalist Powers (the problem of military intervention); (2) that it cannot overcome within its own boundaries the disparity between industry and agriculture (the problem of the peasantry); (3) that it cannot create a shut-in socialist society (the problem of imports and the balance of trade). These are indeed the principal difficulties that confront the Soviet Union. They aggravate every crisis; they help to explain the recent food shortage, the peasant troubles in the North Caucasus, the arrest of the British engineers. But it cannot be denied that astounding progress has been made toward solving these problems. And is there anything else to do but face them courageously with all the resources of Soviet Russia?

Trotsky's alternative policy, with its continual threat of war, would be justified only in case there was an imminent chance of proletarian revolution somewhere in the West. Can it be reasonably expected? What, for example, are the prospects of a successful revolution in the United States, the greatest of the capitalist nations?

Let us consider one by one, in relation to this country, the conditions which Trotsky regards as indispensable to a proletarian revolution. The first condition is undoubtedly fulfilled. "The ruling classes, as a result of their practically manifested incapacity to get the country out of its blind alley, lose faith in themselves; the old parties fall to pieces; a bitter struggle of groups and cliques prevails; hopes are placed in miracles or miracle workers"—these words of Trotsky's might be written yesterday or tomorrow by a Washington correspondent. But the other conditions are far from being realized. A strong proletariat united in its hostility to the existing order?—Our proletariat is divided, white against black, native against foreign-born, skilled against unskilled, and is disheartened by its past defeats. An organization by which the proletariat can seize power?—There is none, and the ruling class, forewarned by its experience in Russia, will suppress any soviet that springs into existence. Indeed, the lessons of the Russian revolution have been conned more carefully by the capitalists than by most of the workers. A party acting as the brain of the revolutionary proletariat?—In this country there is only one party, the Communist, which attempts to be revolutionary or to act solely for the workers, and the workers have not yet accepted it as their own. Under these circumstances it is idle to talk about insurrections, conspiracies or the seizure of power.

But the chief obstacle to a revolution in this country is not the weakness of the proletariat: it is rather the strength of the middle classes and their attachment to the old order. In the United States the petty bourgeoisie is not only numerous but extremely influential. Its habits of thought extend above it into the owning class, and beneath it into the ranks of what would be proletarians in other countries. Without at least winning the neutrality of professional people and white-collar workers, no proletarian revolution could even be started. It seems unlikely, today, that they will change their allegiance. A war would, of course, produce a new situation, but the nature and results of a war are impossible to predict. A successful revolution in western Europe might also change "the correlation of forces"—but the situation there is not essentially different from our own.

Yet I do not doubt that the United States will have its revolution. Alexander Hamilton saw to that when he contrived to fashion a Constitution difficult to change (except by will of the Supreme Court) and a national legislature slow to reflect the shifts in popular opinion. The Supreme Court prepared us for revolution by its decisions regarding the "due process" clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. But when the revolution comes, in five years or fifty, it is not likely to be a communist revolution. Germany, not Russia, has traced the path which we seem destined to follow if the crisis continues or recurs. Except for a disastrous war, or the happy discovery of new markets, the only thing that can turn us aside from that steep path into the sea is the influence on the middle classes of the Russian experiment, the success of "socialism in one country."

MALCOLM COWLEY.

The Tolstoy Saga

The Tragedy of Tolstoy, by Countess Alexandra Tolstoy. New Haven: Yale University Press. 294 pages. $3.

IN THE early days of November, 1910, the interest of the civilized world was centered on the tiny apartment of the station master of Astapovo where Tolstoy was lying, awaiting death. After years of agony and tension, he had left the Countess at Yasnaia Poliana—forever. By special train she reached Astapovo, but was not admitted to the sickroom until the very last moment of her husband's life. When the news came that he was gone, the world felt that its heart had dropped out. The sanctity of that life still hovers above us. When about to comment on "The Tragedy of Tolstoy," an old Russian like myself feels as if he were going to review the Bible.

This account of a daughter (Countess Alexandra, "Sasha" to him and to us) makes a simple and beautiful book. No one could doubt that she is telling the truth, scrupulously. And often she does so with great skill. Not that "The Tragedy of Tolstoy" is great literature, but in its directness, concreteness and selective tact it often approaches greatness. During the many days and nights when Sasha was copying Tolstoy's manuscripts (heartbreakingly illegible they were!) or was writing to his dictation, she must have absorbed some of his inimitable gift.

From the minute mosaics of Sasha's account Lev Niko-

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layevich reëmerges. Tall and massive, light of movement; a bit awe-inspiring, with his all-seeing eyes, shaggy brows, Mosaic beard, but ready to smile and laugh and capable of crying; seething with visions, images and ideas, but also playful, adventurous, even prankish (hiding under the dinner table, with children, guests, English governess and all, before mother comes in); steeped in the wisdom of the ages, religions, philosophies, arts, but ready to forget it all for one moment of human understanding; simple and coarse in his peasant clothes, but only to the insensitive (or in pictures), for, after all, the plebeian shirt and boots were but a gesture of protest—above them loomed the head of an aristocrat, a "true count," as my father wrote after his visit to Tolstoy in 1909. They were leonine, these old thoroughbreds, Lev and his brother Sergei; they even yawned like lions. "A fearful moan or cry would suddenly come from the study. 'What is it? Who is crying? Is Lev Nikolayevich unwell?' persons unused to the ways of the house would ask apprehensively. 'It's nothing,' we would answer, laughing. 'Lev Nikolayevich is yawning.' "

As for the Countess she was not a mean woman. She possessed endless energy, diverse minor abilities, and could be charming, on occasion. When young, she must have made a fascinating model for Kitty (in "Anna Karenina"). But she was of this world, uncompromisingly. First and foremost, she was a "lady," silk petticoats, French heels, lorgnette and all. She swelled in the presence of the great ones of this world and shrank from the common herd (one of Sasha's suitors who to the Countess seemed "well bred, of a good family and very wealthy," was to Tolstoy a "smooth-licked prince"). To the peasants and house servants she was an exacting mistress, and earthly goods counted for much. Her husband's quixotic notions—giving the land to the peasants, leaving the proceeds of his works to the public—were in her eyes silly and criminal. Also, she was jealous, blindly and furiously jealous, of Masha (another daughter who was like the "dark" people, the Tolstoyans), of Sasha, of Chertkov. Tolstoy was one of her possessions, her inalienable property. She would share him with no one. Had the Countess been of the weak and yielding sort, the situation would have been easier. But she was strong and determined. "It was impossible to go against her wishes," comments Sasha in connection with the education the Countess gave to her son Vanichka, evidently a remarkable boy, who died young.

When Tolstoy was excommunicated by the Holy Synod, he wrote his "Reply to the Synod." Sasha and her brother, Misha, having obtained a hectograph, were hurrying through an "edition" of this and other essays. At this task they were overtaken by the Countess, who was sick of the whole business. "It seemed to me that everything around us shook when the storm of her wrath broke over our heads. She was going to chase Misha out of the house, to lock me up in a room, and to throw out the hectograph." None of these things happened, of course, but the hectograph was exiled. There were times, usually after a great crisis, when the Countess softened and became a different person. After Vanichka's death all "were amazed at mother's meekness. She seemed born anew—she was kind, never angry, and she wept unceasingly. Father was comforted in his grief by the thought that misfortune seemed to draw her away from worldly things and vanity, and to awaken in her spiritual, deeper interests which would not only lighten her own life but would make her nearer to him." And again, after the death of Tolstoy, "there was a great change in mother. She suddenly became a mild, gentle old woman. . . . She would sigh and begin speaking about how sorry she was for having made him suffer. 'I really think I was insane,' she said." No, the Countess was not a mean woman. She was one of those cruel innocents who torture with love. The mother of Tolstoy's friend and favorite pianist, Shoora Goldenweiser (often mentioned in the book), was such a woman. Whatever intellectual and artistic abilities the children possessed had come from her; but throughout a long life she tortured them all, husband and children, with her love, solicitude and fussiness ("her attention was never turned to essentials, always to details," we read of the Countess).

Fully to understand the tragic domestic tension of the Tolstoys, it must be realized that, higher things apart, the nature of their household at Yasnaia Poliana was such as to get at anyone's nerves. It was, in fact, not unlike a madhouse, on a minor scale. The visitors alone sufficed to make it such. Chertkov, Gussev, Biryukov, friends and biographers, were not the only ones; nor were men like Bryan, who was so taken with his host that he canceled an audience with the Tsar and lingered on. In continuous procession people came and went, men and women, radicals and conservatives, foreigners and Russians, princes, statesmen, sectarians, adventurers, journalists, celebrity chasers, would-bes and has-beens of all descriptions. There were also the Tolstoyans whom the Countess detested, the "dark" people who came always and stayed long, worshiped and scolded, for many of them lacked that forbearance and charity Tolstoy himself possessed. And then again there were the peasants. They came daily, solicitous, persistent, with urgent demands often impossible of execution, and they loved, Russian fashion, to linger on indefinitely. Some visitors turned into permanent residents. For example —"the Swede"!

> When I was still a little girl and liked to run out impetuously upon the porch, I sometimes flew straight into something big, hairy, naked, and bounced off in terror. It was "the Swede." I don't know where he came from. . . . "I wish to stay here," he would say, marking off with his big, soiled feet a small area on the ground. Conventions and common ideas of decency did not exist for him. When he felt hot he lay down on our porch practically naked, throwing some rag over his mighty, hairy body. He slept on the ground, placing an empty bottle under his gray, shaggy head instead of a pillow. . . . "He ought to be chased away, this ragamuffin," mother used to say. "Dirty, naked, and here are young ladies, guests—Liovochka always nurses all kinds of vagabonds!"

It was not easy. . . . Among the permanent residents were the rats:

> They gnawed holes in the floors, got into closets, spoiled books, ate the candles, fell into the food and sometimes jumped upon bedside tables and ran over the beds and heads of the sleepers. Father usually baited the trap himself with a piece of cheese smoked over a candle flame; and when a rat was caught he cautiously carried it somewhere far into the woods and there set it free.

And as with the rats, so with the others, the "Swedes," the peasants, the Tolstoyans, the revolutionists, the officials, the princes. Tolstoy treated them gently and turned them back to the world, to pursue their ways and come again—and again. Let us not be too hard on the Countess: the air about the great is hard to breathe.

ALEXANDER GOLDENWEISER.

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Four Novels—Not without Propaganda

Hizzoner the Mayor, by Joel Sayre. New York: The John Day Company. $2.

Man's Mortality, by Michael Arlen. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.

Sing Before Breakfast, by Vincent McHugh. New York: Simon and Schuster. $2.50.

Sunset Song, by Lewis Grassic Gibbon. New York: The Century Company. $2.

IN A SENSE all novels are propaganda. The bad ones serve at least one good purpose when they give away the show, and reveal some particularly obvious or particularly crude attempt to direct the reader's judgments to a specific end. The sort of imaginative coercion that is hidden, in good fiction, behind careful prose or distinguished characterizations or the traditional graces of good writing, reveals itself so shockingly in a really bad novel as to make the reader vigilant against all such underhanded attempts to influence him, and enables him to detect the workings of the propaganda machine in the most innocent-appearing romances. If you read enough detective stories, for example, you will have no difficulty in seeing that they involve an attempt to promote a narrow, special and rather flattering concept of the social role of the police, a charge which might seem far-fetched if you based your opinion only on the works of Conan Doyle and Wilkie Collins.

As an extraordinarily bad novel, "Hizzoner the Mayor" has the sort of value described above. It is its only value. The rise and fall of Mayors Holtsapple and Satchells, their hilarious political campaigns, the revolt of the taxpayers and the Sans-Chemises and their attacks on City Hall—all this seems, superficially, quite rich material for burlesque; it reminds one of the sort of story a group of people might cook up together with increasing enthusiasm, the imagination calling up endless possibilities, only to find next morning that the scenes had become dull and unreal as soon as they were put down on paper. Moreover, the author cannot wholly preserve his mood of gay extravagance, since politics these days is a serious matter; he adulterates his remarks with rather pompous bits of wisdom. "They did not realize," he suddenly says, referring of course to the voters, "that it was all to be charged up to them in increased cost of food and rent and clothing. . . . They did not know enough to suspect the men they had chosen to govern them." And so we are left with another attack against those famous old punching bags of the editorial departments, Political Graft, High Taxes and The Gangster Menace, all of them being polished off like set-ups too battered to put on a good show.

"Man's Mortality" is also a political romance, but one which is serious from the beginning. It is laid in that novelist's future of super-airplanes, death rays, and cold-blooded master-minds, and the central complication is the collapse of the *pax aeronautica,* this peace consisting in world control by a world transport system, established after "the overthrow of Stalin" and the reorganization of the Soviet Union into a country ruled by wealthy industrialists. International Airways has upheld the *pax aeronautica,* through the League of Nations and an international police force, and International Airways is broken by the rising nationalist spirit, a revival of the ideals of freedom and personal liberty, and the resistance of some of the young officers—disciplined, self-sacrificing members of the English and European upper classes—to the cold-blooded tasks assigned to them. Skipping over the frosting of this story—such details as the sinister doings of Madam Abazar, Russian director of the world organization, who drives men to their death, or the bloody battles in which cities and fleets are destroyed—skipping over this, Mr. Arlen's message is quite clear. What is the cause of the horrors evoked? The cause is the desire for peace, the desire to build a habitable world. Disinterestedness, self-sacrifice, "indigestible humanitarianism"—these are the impulses which, so the author believes, plunge the world into anarchy.

"Sing Before Breakfast" is concerned, not with broad political happenings, but with the intimate, personal relations of men and women: it is the sort of work that is commonly supposed to be free of political significance. But it is a characteristic idealization of the artist in contemporary society, in the way that so many detective stories are idealizations of the police. It presents individuals living in semi-isolation, with the author's attention concentrated on the minute fluctuations of their moods, on their trivial actions and speech, on the physical characterizations of the scene. The routine of Carey and Julie, on an island off the northeast coast, is interrupted by Genoa Lamport, millionaire's daughter, and by the economic crisis. "Sing Before Breakfast" is carefully written, with descriptive passages that evoke a memory of Mary Butts's prose, and with conversations, made up principally of scrambled clichés, a mocking sentimentality, a good deal like Hemingway. Indeed, Carey seems to have modeled himself on Hemingway's heroes, even to the point of being sarcastic about Hemingway. Perhaps because so much meaning is read into small happenings, the troubles of the characters never seem very real; even Carey's and Julie's slow starvation has the air of an ordered literary sequence; it seems incredible that two individuals as conscious and alert should permit themselves to be destroyed by their environment without making even a rudimentary struggle against it.

"Sunset Song" is a novel of the soil; like all novels of the soil, it is far too long, and the author makes only the minimum concessions to the reader's powers of understanding. It is about the village of Kinraddie, in northern Scotland, and it is written in an idiomatic speech which presents some initial barriers, but which becomes familiar. It differs from the majority of contemporary novels in this: the author recognizes that his characters live in a society organized in a specific way, and that their places in this organization play a large part in the formation of their characters and in their relations to one another.

Chris Guthrie is the central character, the agent through whose eyes the village is observed. The first part of the story shows the breaking of the Guthrie family under the demands of the life they lead: the growing bitterness of the father, the suicide of the mother and the flight of the youngest son. The War places a greater tension on the village and draws out more sharply the identifying characteristics of individuals: Chris's husband is shot as a deserter, the village socialist and the village atheist are killed. All this has the sting of actuality, though the conclusion, with Chris's marriage to a socialist clergyman, seems inadequate after the suffering evoked throughout the novel. But for that quality in writing loosely described as warmth, for humor, and for a clear picture of an environment, "Sunset Song" is an excellent novel. It too is propaganda, but it is well written and moving—in short, it is good propaganda.

ROBERT CANTWELL.

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FOUR POEMS BY WILLIAM FAULKNER

The Race's Splendor

The race's splendor lifts her lip, exposes
Amid her scarlet smile her little teeth;
The years are sand the wind plays with; beneath,
The prisoned music of her deathless roses.

Within frostbitten rock she's fixed and glassed;
Now man may look upon her without fear.
But her contemptuous eyes back through him stare
And shear his fatuous sheep when he has passed.

Lilith she is dead and safely tombed
And man may plant and prune with naught to bruit
His heired and ancient lot to which he's doomed,
For quiet drowse the flocks when wolf is mute—
Ay, Lilith she is dead, and she is wombed,
And breaks his vine, and slowly eats the fruit.

Night Piece

Trumpets of sun to silence fall
On house and barn and stack and wall.
Within the cottage, slowly wheeling,
The lamplight's gold turns on the ceiling.
Beneath the stark and windless vane
Cattle stamp and munch their grain;
Below the starry apple bough
Leans the warped and clotted plow.
The moon rolls up, while far away
And thin with sorrow, the sheepdog's bay
Fills the valley with lonely sound.
Slow leaves of darkness steal around.
The watch the watchman, Death, will keep
And man in amnesty may sleep.

The world is still, for she is old
And many's the bead of a life she's told.
Her gossip there, the watching moon
Views hill and stream and wave and dune
And many's the fair one she's seen wither:
They pass and pass, she cares not whither—
Lovers' vows by her made bright,
The outcast cursing at her light;
Mazed within her lambence lies
All the strife of flesh that dies.
Then through the darkened room with whispers speaking
There comes to man the sleep that all are seeking.

The lurking thief, in sharp regret
Watches the far world, waking yet,
But which in sleep will soon be still;
While he upon his misty hill
Hears a dark bird briefly cry
From its thicket on the sky,
And curses the moon because her light
Marks every outcast under night.

Still swings the murderer, bent of knees
In a slightly strained repose,
Nor feels the faint hand of the breeze:
He now with Solomon all things knows:
That, lastly, breath is to a man
But to want and fret a span.

Gray the Day

Gray the day, and all the year is cold,
Across the empty land the swallows' cry
Marks the southflown spring. Naught is bowled
Save winter, in the sky.

O sorry earth, when this bleak bitter sleep
Stirs and turns and time once more is green,
In empty path and lane grass will creep
With none to tread it clean.

April and May and June, and all the dearth
Of heart to green it for, to hurt and wake;
What good is budding, gray November earth?
No need to break your sleep for greening's sake.

The hushed plaint of wind in stricken trees
Shivers the grass in path and lane
And Grief and Time are tideless golden seas—
Hush, hush! He's home again.

Over the World's Rim

Over the world's rim, drawing bland November
Reluctant behind them, drawing the moons of cold:
What do their lonely voices wake to remember
In this dust ere 'twas flesh? what restless old

Dream a thousand years was safely sleeping
Wakes my blood to sharp unease? what horn
Rings out to them? Was I free once, sweeping
Their wild and lonely skies ere I was born?

The hand that shaped my body, that gave me vision,
Made me a slave to clay for a fee of breath.
Sweep on, O wild and lonely: mine the derision,
Then the splendor and speed, the cleanness of death.

Over the world's rim, out of some splendid noon,
Seeking some high desire, and not in vain,
They fill and empty the red and dying moon
And, crying, cross the rim of the world again.

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Our Lopsided Economics

Economic Tendencies in the United States, by Frederick C. Mills. New York: The National Bureau of Economic Research. 639 pages. $5.

PROFESSOR MILLS' study is a first-class example of the modern scientific approach to economic problems. There is included in it an enormous amount of information which is as essential as most of it was hitherto unknown, not only to members of the public, but to many economists themselves. The statistics, moreover, are not piled up in a meaningless heap and cast *en masse* at the reader. They are arranged about significant lines of inquiry which are coming to be recognized as central in the quest for a solution of the disorders of our economy. It is imprudent for anyone to discuss this problem without first having a close look at what Mr. Mills has to show us.

The book examines in succession three periods—the fifteen years before the outbreak of the War in Europe, the War and post-war interregnum of 1914-22, the period of prosperity in 1923-29. Concerning each of these periods the author has asked, what were the changes in production (not only of all goods, but of various important classes of goods), what were the changes in prices and costs and, in the case of the first and last periods, what were the changes in the shares of total income represented by wages, profits and interest, and the changes in other important factors such as foreign trade or the availability of capital and credit. The cumulative impression is almost orchestral. These themes repeated, with variations, in each of three periods, and outlined with precision and meaning, have a truly esthetic effect, although the intention is merely to give useful and comprehensive information.

Many readers will be amazed that it was possible, on the basis of such scattered statistics as exist, to draw such a complete picture as is here presented. Not the least of the virtues of the book is Mr. Mills' technical ingenuity in deriving his figures out of material not collected for his specific purposes. By the same token, statisticians may raise doubts as to the precise validity of some of his summaries. It is, for instance, open to question whether, in a period as short as that of 1923-29, it is permissible to average the gains in production or wages, and present them in the form of an annual rate of increase, since there were wide variations from year to year within the period. The scientific conscience will insist on the utmost care in drawing final conclusions from figures such as are presented in this book without checking over carefully the sources of the figures so that it may be certain exactly what they imply. Nevertheless, Mr. Mills' conclusions are extremely suggestive even where they cannot be taken as final, and in numerous important instances they probably will not be greatly modified by future checking.

Most interesting is his summary of the last period, on the background of the former periods. Production grew more rapidly in this period than before the War, and, in relation to the population, more than twice as rapidly. Production per wage earner in manufacturing increased 43 percent in the decade 1919 to 1929. Whereas before the War manufacturing absorbed more new employees than it laid off, in each two years between 1928 and 1929, 49 out of every 1,000 were separated from given manufacturing industries, while but 45 were taken on. To the instability of employment thus created was added the instability arising from an extreme divergence of the rates of growth or decline in the several industries, which necessitated shifting of labor and capital and a host of minor modifications, in a system which in many respects was becoming less capable of making such adjustments with comparative ease.

A still more important factor of instability was the extremely rapid growth during the latter period of the production of durable goods—both of durable consumers' goods like automobiles and houses and of capital goods like machinery and business buildings. These are subject, at least in an economic system like ours, to far wider fluctuation in demand than are daily necessities like food and clothing. Another class of goods having a highly elastic demand—"incidental, supplementary, non-standard" goods—utilized a larger part of our labor and capital after the War. The output of durable goods increased 5.9 percent a year as against an increase of 2.9 percent for non-durable commodities. Durable goods used for further production were made at a rate which grew 6.4 percent a year after the War. The demand for these types of goods has fallen during the depression far more than that for perishable goods, and it is therefore open to question whether we were well advised to devote so large a proportion of our energies (34 percent) to the making of durable goods—or at least whether we were wise to do so without taking measures to make sure that there would be a demand large enough to absorb the product of the equipment we were making.

The other side of this picture of lopsided production is the capital accumulated to finance it—from $4,000 million to $7,000 million a year from new capital flotations, and $1,000 million to $3,000 million annually from additions to corporate surplus out of profits. Corporate capital funds alone grew in this period more than twice as rapidly as the population.

To these elements of instability were added the changes in prices and costs which markedly reduced the farmers' purchasing power in relation to that of industry, which increased the purchasing power of industrial management and profits far more rapidly than the purchasing power of wages, and the changes in our foreign trade and debtor position. These things outline the masses of the picture. For the details Mr. Mills' book is indispensable.

GEORGE SOULE.

The Famine Years

The Years of the Locust, by Gilbert Seldes. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 355 pages. $3.

I HAVE been trying to decide why Gilbert Seldes's panorama of the past three years in Our America classifies itself so reluctantly and dubiously with Frederick Lewis Allen's "Only Yesterday." Taken as type patterns, the two volumes appear similar indeed. Both are wide-angled surveys of the national stream in motion, as of recent date; both shift now to the political, now to the social, now to the economic, now to the cultural aspects of life; both present the significant, obscure and familiar along with the grandiloquent, remote and official. I have a feeling that Mr. Allen's book did this last more successfully than does Mr. Seldes's—the sorties after the telltale trifle, in "The Years of the Locust," more often seem like asides, and not uncommonly they are unmerged oddities, quite beside any tangible point. But that obviously does not constitute a difference in kind between the two books. . . . I think perhaps the impression of difference develops from this: Mr. Allen's decade was a pageant which had definitely concluded; the last band had

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staggered past and the bass drummer had been run over by a hearse and the crowd had closed in shouting: fade-out. Almost of itself it removed to a plane adapted to esthetic contemplation. But in the case of Mr. Seldes's Locust Years we are trying to see how we looked being run over by three dumptrucks, while we are still being dragged by the fourth.

Under such circumstances it is difficult to decide, to a nicety, whether "The Years of the Locust" is as well organized as its predecessor—if I may so call Mr. Allen's volume. But let us suppose it is, and suppose that Mr. Seldes is not purposefully superficial but informed with a proper contemplative calm. I doubt, nevertheless, that many of us are in condition to weigh the sense and worth of his judgments. When he tells us that Mr. Hoover's failure was due to bad luck and to his chronologically mistaken devotion to an ideal, we are not conscious that an unusually searching ray of perception has been loosed. It is fresh in our minds that some veterans of Anacostia, now encamped at the side of the Hudson, have named a pig after the ex-President. This criticism is not subtle, but it seems to suit the time and our mood.

There is the possibility, besides, that Mr. Seldes' reactions are complex without being acute. There is the possibility that he, the critic, lacks that intricate integrity of vision which enables even the most cultured genius to see a hole in a ladder, so to speak. One of the evidences in favor of this somewhat unkind assumption is that, speaking of Walter Lippmann, Mr. Seldes fails to remark the hole in him. And there are other signs pointing to the same conclusion. For example, Mr. Seldes thinks that American workmen turn toward the Soviet Union because there is so much work for everyone there. This is not a mere slip of the tongue; it is a prevalent lesion of the mind; it is the hokum which makes the share-the-work movement seem more than the invention of a yahoo with the lid off. Obviously what every workman wants is not work, beautiful work, holy work to be shared like a sacrament, but good pay, a good house to live in and the certainty of having plenty to eat tomorrow. For another example, Mr. Seldes fails in two determined efforts to define the secret of Soviet enthusiasm and enterprise. It is "moral fervor," he says, which underlies the plan; it is "an ideal, passionately pursued." Though the obvious explanation is that the wealth of a continent has been preëmpted in favor of a majority class, and that therefore the majority class is enthusiastic and enterprising in its efforts to exploit that wealth, as privileged classes have always been.

Recurrently, throughout Mr. Seldes's book, one finds an effort to maintain the simple separateness of the individual, the unity of the nation, against the insidious suggestions of the left-wing critics to the effect that neither conception can stand analysis from the sociological point of view. Often, in this persistent struggle, Mr. Seldes's objectivity shrinks to little or nothing, as when he finds the Marxian interpretation "the hardest and bitterest version of infant damnation since Jonathan Edwards preached . . . ; it exiles the will from the common affairs of mankind. It does not frankly say that the wrong-headedness of human beings is responsible. . . . It is an excellent theory for those who thrive on depressions." Though the fact would seem to be that Marxism exiles mankind from the common affairs of the will, replacing "human beings" with men having class interests at stake, and making their consequent struggle the impelling force of social history. Mr. Seldes dislikes the idea of a functional opposition at the center of society, but he does not explain why it is inaccurate.

MURRAY GODWIN.

Gregory's New Poems

No Retreat, by Horace Gregory. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 51 pages. $1.50.

THE SECOND volume of Mr. Gregory's verse is so far superior to his first, "Chelsea Rooming House," that we must be grateful for the latter only because it helps to explain the methods by which he has arrived at the best poems of the new book. The earlier book received the kind of praise that would have ruined a poet less intelligent than Mr. Gregory. It was "radical"; Mr. Gregory himself, if I remember rightly, was tempted to identify his experiments in the poetic value of common speech with one of the numerous causes of the People. These causes are good, but there is no necessary connection between them and the art of verse. Mr. Gregory was only doing what Wordsworth did—reforming not society but his language, under the spur of social passion; when the reform is accomplished the poet, being a poet and desiring to wear the ribbon of craft on his coat, tends to forget the passion and settles down to his specific task of writing. That Mr. Gregory has done this in the present volume there is overwhelming evidence.

There is still some blurring of intentions, and perhaps it is well to state the defects of the performance before the merits. Like most poets of his generation, Gregory still has trouble in finding out what his subject matter is: some of the most moving passages in the book are built round the scenes of his youth in Wisconsin, and yet this emotion is not continuous throughout the work. This poet has been so influenced by liberal literary opinions as to feel the obligation to deliver some explicit judgment of American civilization as a whole. Out of this impulse we get two poems, the only poems in the book that are definitely bad: "Emmanuel Bluethorne Requiescat" and "Tombstone with Cherubim"—which are written, however, with considerable dexterity off the top of the mind. This uneasiness about the subject, this suspicion that "America" ought at any rate to be the true material, dams up the intellectual resources that are obviously at Gregory's command, waiting to be used; he takes too literally, in a sort of statistical fashion, a material that can never, in the poetic sense, be understood by any man in a deliberate act of understanding. The result here and there is a flat catalogue and itemization of the vulgarities of Americanism; such material must be heightened by main force, and Gregory, with great tact and skill, exposes it to a parallelism of classical allusion. There are Cassandra, Macbeth, Catullus, Cerberus, Lucretius; but they too are items, whose force depends upon the state of the reader's own learning; it is not that they are miscellaneous or no part of a system, but rather that the poet's intention is not so clearly held that he can focus, with the author of "Lycidas," all the recalcitrant material at hand.

No American poet writing today surpasses Gregory in mastery of rhythm and image. His finest passages, though obviously produced with great labor, have all the look of inevitable ease. The image is never elaborated beyond the span of a manageable rhythm, which follows precisely the complexity of image and brings the image to a simple resolution. I venture to say that the four "Poems for My Daughter" contain the ripest technique among the poems of Gregory's generation.

> Take all my love but spend
> such love to build your mind
> 'gainst hope that leaves behind

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my winter night and snow
falling at the year's end.

These four poems are made up of such simple units of image and rhythm; the total effect is that of completeness and controlled form. In these poems, in "Homage to an Ancestor," in parts of "Valediction to My Contemporaries," we feel a concentration of resources that ought to make Horace Gregory, in the next twenty years, one of the few memorable craftsmen of our time.

ALLEN TATE.

Wagner: The Apprentice Years

The Life of Richard Wagner: Volume I: 1813-1848, by Ernest Newman. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 570 pages. $5.

Richard Wagner: The Story of an Artist, by Guy de Pourtalès. Translated from the French by Lewis May. New York: Harper and Brothers. 421 pages. $4.

The Unconquerable Tristan: The Story of Richard Wagner, by B. M. Steigman. New York: The Macmillan Company. 364 pages. $3.

THE PERSONALITY and career of a man who changed not only music but the entire musical world, should be recorded; and Newman justifies his own work, in the foreword, by the fact that as yet no satisfactory account of Wagner's life has been written. Existing biographies "are practically all second-hand Glasenapp"; and "Glasenapp was so blind a partisan that his interpretation of a document, the amount of selection he may make from it, or the general use to which he may put it, can never be relied upon." Also, earlier partisanship operated on incomplete records. In recent years Wahnfried has permitted more and more of Wagner's letters to be published, researches have been made in various archives, and many notions have had to be changed. Much still remains to be published, to be investigated; andNewman therefore has no illusions about the finality of his own work: it is based on all the evidence available; and is "an attempt to bring, for the first time, all the available Wagner documents into the one focus."

This bringing of documents into one focus is something Newman does superlatively well. He has the necessary industry and patience, the eye for what is significant, the ability to piece details together and weld them into clear narrative. Moreover, in the case of Wagner he gains by a lifetime of absorption in the subject. And in this first volume, where, as he says, it is not so much a question of new material as of correlating and interpreting old material in new ways, his long absorption in the subject enables him to discuss certain aspects of Wagner's character and activity with a completeness and depth of understanding and sympathy that he would not have otherwise.

The first volume takes us to the summer of 1848, to the crisis in Wagner's artistic and financial affairs which led to his revolutionary activities and his flight from Dresden the following May. Newman gives us the roots of this crisis in two chapters entitled "The State of Music in Germany" and "The Economic and Social Status of the Musician." "The reader," he says, "and too often the writer of today, is apt to assume that as the musical world is now, so, more or less, it has always been, with opera and concert institutions flourishing everywhere, with a fairly high level of performance everywhere, with the present facilities for publication, and with the composer occupying much the same economic position towards the publishers and purchasers and performers of his music as he does now." And then he describes the musical world of a hundred years ago: the inadequacy of orchestras, singers and conductors even in important German cities, the wretched economic condition of all musicians except the virtuoso performer. And he points out the significance of this: if Beethoven's maturest work was not understood by his contemporaries, the reason was simply that his contemporaries had to form their ideas of it from performances so incompetent as to make it incomprehensible. "At the Gewandhaus, which already prided itself on being one of the best German institutions of the kind, symphonies and other instrumental works were given without a conductor. . . . In 1830 the Ninth Symphony was given at Leipzig. The orchestra scrambled through the first three movements as best they could without any direction; for the vocal finale the worthy but incompetent Pohlenz appeared at the conductor's desk." So chaotic was the performance that Wagner, who had come to worship the symphony as a result of studying the score, was made to doubt his own previous impressions. And if it did this to him, what must it have done to the others in the audience who did not have his acquaintance with the work?

The Dresden orchestra was inadequate in size (about fifty men), technically incompetent, and seated in a preposterous arrangement which made control by the conductor all but impossible. With this orchestra Wagner had to realize his aims not only as a conductor but as a composer. "We can dimly imagine," says Newman, "what such a piece as the 'Tannhäuser' Overture, which was immensely difficult for that period, must have sounded like on an orchestra of this kind." Nor were even the few good singers fitted for a work like "Tännhauser." "He could not get the singers to phrase the lyrical portions that were not cast in the obvious aria mode in any way but that of the old-style recitative." True enough, "Tännhauser" did succeed, and as a conductor Wagner did achieve performances of unprecedented quality, even under the bad conditions. But he foresaw that these conditions ultimately would prevent him from realizing his aims as a creative and interpretative artist; and he wanted to change them.

Also—and even more important—under existing conditions it was impossible for him to receive a return from his work that would free him from the burden of his debts and give him the peace of mind he needed for composition. "Rienzi," for example, continued to fill the Dresden theatre year after year; but all it brought Wagner was the fee for its first performance—300 thalers (a thaler being about seventy-five cents, and the customary fee at Dresden being only 100 thalers). Such conditions also, Wagner wanted to change.

But his comprehensive "Plan for the Organization of a German National Theatre for the Kingdom of Saxony" came to nothing; and even his modest and eminently sensible proposals for the reform of the orchestra had been turned down by the Court officials. For the new theatre he wanted, a political revolution was necessary. And driving him to action, in the summer of 1848, was the financial ruin which had threatened him all along and now seemed about to overtake him at last.

Newman's intention is to be strictly factual. Pourtalès and Steigman, on the other hand, undertake to give the facts emotional color. Pourtalès' emotion only makes me uncomfortable; Steigman's I find unbearably cheap. And Pourtalès I judge to be more thoroughly acquainted with the material.

B. H. HAGGIN.

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The Return to Realism

The Philosophy of Physical Realism, by Roy Wood Sellars. New York: The Macmillan Company. 500 pages. $4.

THE AIM of theoretical science, according to an excellent tradition, is to make the world we inhabit more familiar by discovering the order in which things arise and perish. But those who rely for their information concerning the natural sciences entirely upon the popular accounts, may easily have persuaded themselves that the ancient ideal has finally been abandoned. For the world, according to these accounts, has become less understandable and more mysterious. Eminent physicists and biologists have argued, in their non-professional writings, that the common world in which we are born and die is an illusion, and a mask for some "inner reality," usually "spiritual." In so pleading, scientists have had the support of the major tradition in modern philosophy, and they have been using, often unwittingly, the stock arguments of philosophic idealism.

Unfortunately for their conclusions, these arguments are not more respectable intellectually when dressed up in the terminology of modern physics. And the theological uses to which the sciences are sometimes put by both scientists and philosophers is regarded as simply scandalous by an important wing of modern thought. Contemporary naturalism is utterly opposed to interpreting advances in knowledge as revelations of the unreality of the world of common sense. Recent naturalism maintains, on the contrary, that the world we inhabit does not owe its existence to any mind or spirit; that this world has a knowable structure which we may discover through the methods of the sciences; that these structures or universal relations are not the creation of our minds, but indicate the ways in which the things in the common-sense world behave; that the diversity of qualities and types of organizations we find in our environment are not reducible without remainder to some common "stuff," whether physical or mental; and that the goods men value are a function of man's own complex body, and are therefore not "good in themselves" independently of his desires and capacities.

There is some justice in the paraphrase of Bacon's maxim that a little philosophy inclines a man's mind to idealism, but depth in philosophy brings men's minds to naturalism. But, it must be added, the naturalism to which a thinker returns in his maturity is not the naïve naturalism, implicit in everyday behavior, which he had renounced. It is a naturalism which must be deepened and clarified by intense reflection. It is a naturalism which will understand the common-sense distinctions and practices in terms of their limitations and implications. It is a naturalism which must show in detail that the furthest reaches of theoretical knowledge never disclose to us a world other than the world of common-day life, except that it is a world seen more clearly and without inconsistency.

This book by Professor Sellars is a contribution toward such a disciplined naturalism. Although addressed primarily to professional philosophers, much of it can be read with profit by interested lay readers. His comments upon the intellectual vagaries of scientists and philosophers are generally shrewd, and he has an enviable knack of penetrating with a phrase to the heart of an issue and revealing the confusions of thought in some respectable mystification. He has an unspoiled sense for the actualities of a problem, even though he is frequently misled by his own language into supposing the matter is as simple as he says it is. Indeed, the book may have a greater appeal to the intelligent layman than it is likely to have for professional students. For he comes to the problems of a naturalistic philosophy through the tradition in which the question of how, *in general,* it is possible for us to know, takes precedence over every other inquiry. A good fraction of the book is therefore devoted to the traditional but barren problems of epistemology. Much of it reads like a series of marginal notes on a dozen or so recent volumes, and Professor Sellars has scarcely done justice to the important topics he discusses. The book abounds in slapdash, sometimes accurate, characterizations of his contemporaries, many of whose views are rejected only to have identical doctrines exhibited as the exclusive property of the philosophy of physical realism. The untrained reader may easily get the impression that in philosophy a thinker regards a doctrine as false when it is stated by someone other than himself.

To this reviewer no task seems more worth while than the development of an adequate naturalistic philosophy. He hopes therefore that Professor Sellars will return to this task in the future, but that if he does so he will explore the implications and difficulties of his position more systematically than he has yet done. ERNEST NAGEL.

Most Lovely and Unfaithful

The Odyssey of Homer, newly translated into English prose by T. E. Shaw. New York: Oxford University Press. 327 pages. $3.50.

T. E. SHAW'S English "Odyssey" is far and away the most expressive and vivid of English prose versions, and at the same time by a wide margin the most unfaithful. In combined attractiveness and waywardness it falls but little short of the old translation of Lucian by le Sieur d'Ablancourt that was dubbed *la belle infidèle.*

In this case, however, the infidelity is in large part conscious and purposeful, the result of a design that reveals itself everywhere without being anywhere set down directly. It amounts, I should say, to this, that if the "Odyssey" "is the oldest book worth reading for its story and the first novel of Europe," the thing to do is to give the public a rendering of it which everybody will read with ease and pleasure for the story and as a novel; of course, the more accurately it can be described as translation, the better, but after all, "the tale's the thing," as with Homer. The book that grew out of this idea is hard for its author himself to describe as a translation, but nobody can deny that it tells a lively story. To open the book anywhere is to have your eye detained. And the printer has helped uncommonly with a setting of such rare quality as to befit a masterpiece.

Shaw's method involves little concession to the epic manner beyond the use of a quaint, half old-fashioned, half individual style which is elevated enough to avoid the banality of Samuel Butler, but stops short of the archaic stiffness of Butcher and Lang. The effect is excellent, except that it is too often shattered by colloquialisms like "made him wise to things," "solicit hunks of bread off him," "totted up," and "drool" (in its slang sense).

Mr. Shaw (one still thinks of him as Lawrence of Arabia) departs on principle from Homer and the tradition of Homeric translation not only in recasting so freely that it sticks in his own crop but, more significantly, in systematic heightening of color and in constant variation

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to disguise the formal repetition so dear to the Greek epic. This last point, to which he does not allude, takes him farther away from his original than anything else in his method. "The tenuous dead," "the shambling legions of the dead," "the wan muster of the piteous dead," all stand for the same phrase in Homer. Menelaus is made to discharge his part in wigs far more numerous than the beards of Bottom the weaver, for he is not only fair-haired and fair, but brown-haired, tawny, auburn, yellow-maned and tawny-crested, to say nothing of his being by the same token high-colored and ruddy.

More striking, however, is what happens to Homer's set forms for introducing speakers. In especial, the metamorphoses of his "winged words" are quite beyond anything that Proteus could bring off. They may appear in their own shape or vanish completely. They may disguise themselves thinly as "words which thrilled," or very effectively as anything you like from "saying cordially" to "loudly shot back at her." It is quite bewildering to find them even bobbing up where they ought not to be. In one place we read, "suddenly he spoke out to his son," and then, a little later, "Telemachus gasped out." But in the Greek, except for the fact that Odysseus uses "winged words," the two expressions are identical; each simply "spoke at once to" the other. This intrusion of stage directions is certainly not translating in any ordinary sense, but if one is bent upon eschewing repetition in rendering Homer, one is bound to come out there or thereabouts. It is to be accepted or rejected as part and parcel of the general plan, to which, in fact, it adds the final touch of vividness.

A degree of looseness, of paraphrasing approximation, was clearly part of the plan also. Beyond that, though often difficult to distinguish from it (for example, in the beginning and the end of the invocation), there is much more of definite error than there need have been. Instead of improvement on previous translations, which might easily have been achieved by making more use of the commentaries or at even less cost by consulting Bérard's French, one finds their long-standing errors almost all perpetuated and a round number of new ones added. They run, I expect, at least one to the page. A couple call for special remark. To make Homer say: "Changing the bow to his right hand he proved the string" was to miss a rare chance to score off all the dons and Samuel Butler to boot, for that makes Odysseus left-handed, quite gratuitously. "With his right hand he grasped and proved the string" is what the poet meant and said. Again, to differ from all of them in making Irus promise Odysseus "to spatter the teeth of his jaw about the ground as a boar in the crops rattles down grains of corn" is not setting them right. The Greek cannot mean anything of the kind. "I'll knock every tooth clean out of your jaw for the trespassing boar that you are" conveys his meaning with greater accuracy. But perhaps the pretty but much less pointed figure which has been substituted is a concession to modern readers who do not know that in the days of old you could do that to a pig in your crops, in the island of Cyprus, for instance.

The book is not for those who want to find out, as nearly as may be, just what Homer said and how he said it. Those who want to read the "Odyssey" as a story may enjoy it without undue misgiving; it is a model of fidelity beside Chapman or Pope, who brought great pleasure to many in their time. But they should not let their enjoyment be marred by the deplorable preface with its pen-picture of "this Homer" deduced from his work,

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no more authentic than the Attic vase-painter's much more attractive sketch on the title-page, and its balancing of his merits and defects against those of William Morris, which the translation itself should suffice to offset, and its wholly uncritical comment on the manners and morals of his characters.

The translation would be more enjoyable and more Homeric if its beauty were less insistent and more pervasive. Its inequalities, its restlessness, its exaggerations, its self-consciousness, are shortcomings particularly serious in a translation of Homer. A. M. HARMON.

Book Notes

BELLES LETTRES

INDIVIDUALISM: An American Way of Life, by Horace M. Kallen. *New York: Liveright, Inc. 241 pages. $2.*

Dr. Kallen has undertaken to rehabilitate individualism from the discredit which it has suffered through Mr. Hoover and other interpreters. In this endeavor the author draws a distinction between individualism and rugged individualism, or egotism. "If Individualism keeps lapsing into egotism, egotism as often rises into Individualism." Individualism as the American way of life insists upon the primacy of individual experience, and the instrumentality of social institutions. Nevertheless, "it may be the very peak and pinnacle of Individualism to insist upon a form of association for work and upon a technique of production and distribution of material goods which are called *Socialism.* The essential principle is that of *consent,* which generates a common attitude, a feeling of community and understanding which is patterned in an idea." Dr. Kallen draws a distinction between the achievement of a better social order by persuasion and by dictatorship, whether fascist or communist. No one will deny that the former is more agreeable to American psychology, though a question may arise as to the time element involved in the process. As in many books of this type the interest lies largely in the things said by the way. Dr. Kallen's style carries a certain intellectual embonpoint, not incompatible, however, with trenchancy and thrust.

WALT WHITMAN AND THE CIVIL WAR, edited by Charles I. Glicksberg. *Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 213 pages. $2.50.*

The editor of this volume has brought together a group of Whitman *inédits* which illuminate his biography for the period of the Civil War and a few years thereafter—newspaper articles, memoranda, letters, manuscripts, versions of poems, newspaper clippings and the like. None of these things forces any considerable revision of the accepted facts of Whitman's life, but all of them have a certain interest, especially a series of special articles written for The New York Leader in 1862 (an obscure year), four of which are descriptions of the Broadway Hospital, and prove that Whitman's career as a "wound dresser" began months before he left New York for Washington. "I shook hands with them all round at parting," he writes of one visit to soldier patients, "and I know we all felt as if it were the separation of old friends." Whitman the journalist and the letter writer is often amusingly remote from Whitman the bard, but nothing that he wrote, even when the pot boils most audibly between the lines, is wholly featureless; and on almost every page of this volume of dry sticks, glass beads and rags, there is something that sparkles with an authentic light and reminds you that this inquiring reporter was also a great poet.

BIOGRAPHY

LORD JEFFERY AMHERST: A Soldier of the King, by J. C. Long. *New York: The Macmillan Company. 387 pages. $4.*

The name of Lord Jeffery Amherst is kept alive in the United States because it is attached to a college. Mr. Long, utilizing a recently discovered correspondence of some 85,000 items, presents him with more considerable credentials to fame. It was Amherst

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who conquered Canada for England—an accomplishment generally credited to the ill fated and more romantic Wolfe. It was also Amherst who showed the colonists how to raise and maintain troops without money and how to utilize artillery in frontier warfare—knowledge which proved exceedingly helpful in the Revolution. To Amherst also goes the credit for quelling the open rebellion against the Crown which has gone down in the history books as the Gordon Riots. Although it finally degenerated into a religious conflict, the Gordon revolution was essentially a class struggle—a protest against industrial poverty, increasing unemployment and the refusal of the ruling class to give political representation to the mass of the people. This shadowy phase of English history makes interesting reading in the light of modern events.

AN UNDIPLOMATIC DIARY, by Harry Hill Bandholtz. *New York: Columbia University Press. 424 pages. $3.50.*

General Bandholtz was the chief of the American division of the Inter-Allied military mission to Hungary in 1919. The Bolshevik revolution, headed by Béla Kun, had been suppressed by a Rumanian army, which thereupon proceeded to loot the country in fine Oriental fashion. The first object of the mission was to put a stop to the looting and to bring about the retirement of the Rumanians to the boundary line assigned to them by the Supreme Council in Paris. This would enable the old ruling classes of Hungary to reëstablish a stable government on the old foundations. General Bandholtz relates in pungent "undiplomatic" Americanese how all the efforts of the mission were frustrated, on the one hand, by the shameless methods of the Rumanians, on the other hand, by the apparent neglect of the Supreme Council. This diary furnishes another proof, if indeed proof were needed, that in their West Point graduates the American people possess an excellent body of public servants, whose ability and devotion can be turned to other uses than those of war.

These United States

HUMAN GEOGRAPHY OF THE SOUTH, by Rupert B. Vance. *Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. 616 pages. $4.*

Viewing the American South as a "test of human adequacy to master the resources of a region and to develop thereon a distinctive and competent culture," Dr. Vance has written a solid, interesting and sometimes engrossing book. One of its most important achievements is that it brings together much material, including many maps and tables, hitherto so widely scattered as to be practically inaccessible. Chapter headings give some idea of the book's range: "The Southern Soil"; "The Cotton Economy"; "The Piedmont Crescent of Industry"; "The Southern Highlands"; "Climate"; "Diet and Human Adequacy." Concluding that the South has failed to realize its potentialities, remaining in a backward stage of colonial economy, Dr. Vance outlines a brief plan for a new reconstruction. Though pleading eloquently for a "folk renaissance," and understanding the need for industrial reform, he places his hopes in an inspired, benevolent capitalism.

PIONEER DAYS IN ARIZONA, by Frank C. Lockwood. *New York: The Macmillan Company. 402 pages. $4.*

Our state histories have often borne a heavy cargo of ill assorted material and have too frequently been written without skill or perspective. In "Pioneer Days in Arizona" Mr. Lockwood has produced a volume that might serve as something of a model. He writes with persuasive ardor, but his view is nowhere narrowed by his feeling. If every state possessed a basic history so genuinely readable and so amply developed we might have a sound beginning for that regional development which has seemed to offer a basis for both life and literature. It may be retorted that few states have the picturesque accoutrements with which Arizona is so lavishly endowed; few, for example, have a Tombstone. But though Tombstone is given its proper place in his book, Mr. Lockwood has not enlarged that place; rather he has revealed its casual origins in terms of a group of characters and has added enough factual evidence on silver mining in the region and enough pictures of incidental modes of life there to produce a firmly

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rounded effect. The emphasis upon character throughout his book is admirably pointed; each chapter slips into vignettes, from those that deal with the early Spanish treasure hunters—here necessarily in bare outline but keeping the sense of character none the less—to the Tombstone days and after. The chapters on the mission fathers, on American hunters and trappers, on army operations in Arizona—more interesting than one might suppose—on the scientific expeditions of the eighteen-fifties, and on the first American settlers, are all filled with an abundance of details as to individuals and their accomplishments. Here in its broad essentials is the humanly varied stream of an extended regional tradition.

LOS ANGELES, by Morrow Mayo. *New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 352 pages. $2.50.*

Two things: the author's expressed wish to be above all "eminently readable," and the subtitle, "A History with Sideshows," are clues to Mr. Mayo's appraisal of his subject, his method of approach and the form of the book. Strictly speaking, "Los Angeles" is not a history at all; it is rather a series of sketches or articles strung together more or less chronologically and dealing, in part, with such newsy phenomena as Aimee Semple McPherson, Hollywood, California Fundamentalism, and Robert A. Millikan. More important, more interesting, are the pages devoted to the throat-cutting of the rival railroads, the fight for a harbor, the great boom of the eighties and, especially, the "rape" of Owens Valley for its water. There is a superficial study of the labor problem (Mexican labor is not mentioned, nor is the Japanese farmer); also there is a rehash of the Times bombing and the McNamara trial.

Travel

SARDINIAN SIDESHOW, by Amelie Posse-Brázdová. *New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 261 pages. $3.*

Italy's entrance into the War found the young Countess Posse (of Sweden) living on the grounds of a fabulously Bohemian estate outside of Rome, engaged to a Czech painter and concerned with what would become of her husband if war was declared. It was, they were married and were interned in Sardinia with many other Czechs and Poles. Her book is the story of their internment and what they made of it—which was a great deal. It is surprising to learn how strong Czech feeling against Austria then was and how active Masaryk and Benes already were. What time Countess Posse-Brázdová lived in her fishing village, her sensitive and essentially civilized intelligence caught the color and the feeling of whatever she heard and saw—the landscape, the fantastic nobles and priests, island ethnology, individual personalities and racial distinctions. She was always interested and generally amused. Her very human gifts are both sharp and light; writing comes easily to her and what she says is pleasant if harmlessly anticlimactic at times, for every story she tells seems sure to come out well in the end.

Fiction

MASK OF SILENUS, by Babette Deutsch. *New York: Simon and Schuster. $2.*

Less a novel than a prolonged sketch, Miss Deutsch's book brings forth from the obscurity of Plato's Dialogues a Socrates ugly and old, wise and noble, and causes him briefly to live, and then to die. Conversation and discourse are its chief substance. As Miss Deutsch says in the introductory note, "the best things" are Plato's. Episodic, a novel chiefly by courtesy, the incidents of the book are few: Socrates' arrest, trial, death. Domestic discussion with Xantippe, Crito's banquet, a suggestion of the life of Athens: all fall away into a background for the narrating of Socrates' imprisonment, his death. In recounting these, Miss Deutsch has not bungled. The trial for blasphemy and perverting the youth of Athens is, in comparison, cold. What nobility Miss Deutsch's book possesses is the not inconsiderable nobility of its subject. What invention it contains is not offensive, but what antiquarianism it has seems hardly adequate, since Miss Deutsch has not scrupled to strengthen and to freshen discomfitingly her narrative with certain details unmistakably misappropriated from the New Testament. Occasionally to fall into what seems a confusion between the Christ and Socrates seems less to be evidence of Miss

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Deutsch's lack of scrupulousness as a restorer of antiquity and a creator, than of a failure fully to apprehend the significance of a Socrates in a pagan world.

ONE, NONE AND A HUNDRED THOUSAND, by Luigi Pirandello. *Translated from the Italian by Samuel Putnam. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.75.*

In a prefatory note Pirandello explains that "this book not only depicts dramatically, but at the same time demonstrates by what might be termed a mathematical method, the impossibility of any human creature being to others what he is to himself." His "mathematical method" consists of letting his main character (who addresses himself to the reader) progress from very simple discoveries and deductions about himself to more and more complex ones. A casual observation from his wife that his right nostril hangs lower than his left opens a new and irksome world to Moscarda, a world that becomes more irksome as he looks at himself objectively for the first time and realizes that his wife and his friends each have their own different conceptions of him. He makes wild efforts to make them see him as he sees himself, but only succeeds in impressing everyone that he is mad. Pirandello is, as usual, stimulating with his variations on the conceptions of Reality and Self.

Contributors

JOSHUA KUNITZ, writer, translator and lecturer, has traveled extensively in Russia, where he made a study of the national minorities and Soviet literature. He was one of the editors of "Voices of October," a collection of Russian revolutionary literature, and is at present writing a book on Tadjikistan, which he visited in 1931.

LUDWIG LORE, a well known German-American journalist, was for fifteen years editor-in-chief of the New Yorker Volkszeitung.

GRANVILLE HICKS, assistant professor of English at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, is completing a book on American literature since the Civil War.

PAUL ROSENFELD, critic of art and music, is the author of "Musical Chronicle," "Men Seen" and of several other volumes, one of which is a novel. He is at present delivering a series of lectures on modern music at the New School for Social Research.

ALEXANDER GOLDENWEISER, professor of Thought and Culture at the University of Oregon, is the son of a prominent member of the Tolstoy group. His latest book, "History, Psychology and Culture," was published in February by Alfred A. Knopf.

ROBERT CANTWELL, author of "Laugh and Lie Down" and "The Land of Plenty," which will appear this spring, is a staff writer for The New Outlook and a contributor to Common Sense, Modern Youth and other magazines.

WILLIAM FAULKNER'S next book will be a volume of verse, "A Green Bough," which Smith and Haas will issue this month. The poems in the present issue of The New Republic are selected from it.

MURRAY GODWIN has appeared in The American Mercury, The North American Review, The New Freeman and in other magazines both in this country and abroad. He is at present living in Staten Island, New York, and writing a novel.

ALLEN TATE, who has published two volumes of verse and two biographies, recently returned to Tennessee from France, where he has been living for the past year.

B. H. HAGGIN contributes musical criticism to various magazines and is now writing a book on music and its present background.

ERNEST NAGEL is an instructor in Philosophy at Columbia University.

A. M. HARMON has taught Greek at Princeton and at Yale, where he has been a professor for the past eighteen years. He has published a translation of Lucian.

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STATE OF NEW YORK } SS.
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Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and County aforesaid, personally appeared Daniel Mebane, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of The New Republic and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption required by the Act of August 21, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Law and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

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